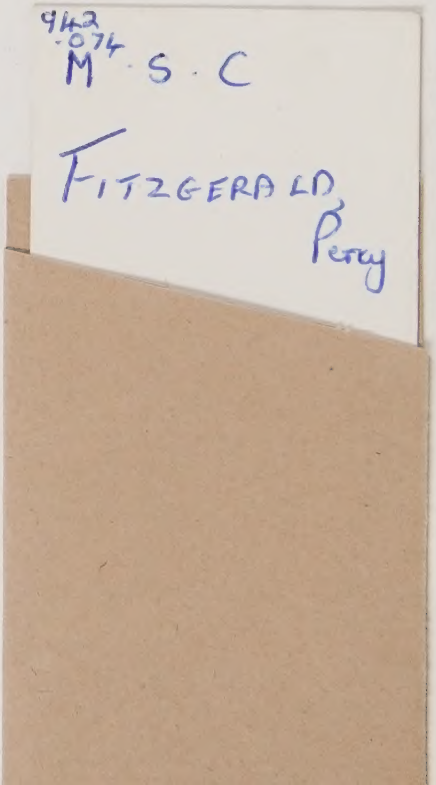
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THE LIFE

OF

GEORGE THE FOURTH

INCLUDING

HIS LETTERS AND OPINIONS

WITH

A VIEW OF THE MEN, MANNERS, AND POLITICS OF HIS REIGN.

BY

PERCY FITZGERALD, M.A., F.S.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF GARRICK."

In Two Volumes.

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CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
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BOOK I.—*continued.*

THE

LIFE OF GEORGE IV.

CHAPTER I.

1809.

In January, 1809, the public were to be entertained and shocked by another unfortunate scandal connected with the Duke of York. It is hardly desirable to revive the well-known business of Mrs. Clarke, or of Colonel Wardle and other performers in the business; and we shall pass it over as lightly as possible. Never was there an affair so unlucky for all concerned—for the Duke himself, the royal family, the ministry, and the public—who, though by this time prepared to accept any amount of scandal, were shocked at the revelations now made. One Colonel Wardle, a Member of Parliament, was the industrious agent in bringing forward the matter. It was the fashion to make her out to be a person of no education, but she could write well, and there was issued in 1798 a prospectus of a poem, called "Ianthe," for the benefit of Colonel Frederick's daughters and children, dedicated to the Prince of Wales, by Miss Clarke.*

Mrs. Clarke was a daughter or god-daughter of the unfortunate "Colonel Frederick," son of the ill-fated Theodore of Corsica. Curiously enough, Colonel Frederick seems to have been employed by the royal brothers in negotiating their Dutch loan. It was undisputed that this lady had engaged in the trafficking of promotions in the army. These charges were solemnly made by Colonel Wardle in the January of 1809, and, but for the stupid and confident self-assertion of the ministers, who protested that it was "impossible that, after the result of the inquiry, any suspicion even would attach to his royal highness," it might have been contrived that the business should not at least have

* Cyrus Redding, "Yesterday and To-day," i. 224.

been thrust upon the public. A thick volume of testimony, letters, and details connected with promotions attests the corruption that was going on. The defenders of the Duke could urge that all these promotions were of persons deserving promotion and within the Duke's discretion to promote, and that he could not help an artful woman taking bribes and giving out that she had contrived them. The Ministry affected to be indignant at the technical charge which they said was raised of the Duke's sharing the profits of these transactions: but this was a false issue, the true corruption lying in his being influenced by such a person and knowing that she was making a trade of her influence. A man of the highest honour and sagacity had listened to the whole case, and his strict impartiality may be accepted—viz. Sir S. Romilly. After stating that even the accuser Wardle was anxious that they should go before a private committee, and that the Ministry, in their foolish confidence in the Duke's innocence, hoped not only to clear the Duke, but confound their opponents, he mentioned that "written evidence and documents, not known to be in existence either by Wardle or by the principal witness, Mrs. Clarke, were discovered, and produced by the witnesses who appeared for the Duke; and these did his royal highness more mischief than anything that was said by the witnesses against him. It was established, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the Duke had permitted Mrs. Clarke to interfere in military promotions, that he had given commissions at her recommendation, and that she had taken money for the recommendations. That the Duke knew that she took money, or that he knew that the establishment which he had set on foot for her was partly supported with the money thus illegally procured by her, did not appear otherwise than from her evidence. She, however, asserted the fact directly and positively, and her evidence was supported in many other particulars which seemed the most incredible by such strong corroborations, that her character, her resentment, and her contradictions were not sufficient to render her evidence altogether incredible."

All the incidents that led to the transactions, some years old now, were "raked up." The Duke had secured his release by promising an annuity, which was left unpaid. He paid no one. Exasperated by this treatment, she addressed threatening letters to Mr. Adam, declaring that she would publish everything:

"Yet, before I do anything publicly, I will send to every one of H.R.H.'s family a copy of what I mean to publish. Had H.R.H. only have been a little punctual, this request had never been made." No answer being given to this, she used another form of threat:

"I have employed myself since, in committing to paper every

circumstance within my recollection during the intimacy of H.R.H. and myself. The fifty or sixty letters of H.R.H. will give weight and truth to the whole. On Tuesday I have promised to give these up, if I hear nothing further after this last notice; and when once given out of my own possession, it will be impossible to recall."

On no notice being taken of this, the letters were put in the hands of Sir R. Philips. A threat having been used of publication, Lord Moira was employed by the Prince to interpose. Noblemen and gentlemen were thus required by the royal brethren to degrade themselves by acting as agents in this description of business.* It was understood that Lord Moira succeeded in his negotiations, and secured the documents and letters (said to be ninety in number) as well as "the disclosures," of which 18,000 were said to have been printed off. This, it might have been hoped, would have been a warning to a man of prudence. But she was again set at defiance—the annuity left unpaid—and the result was Colonel MacMahon also took a sort of mysterious part in the affair. Mr. Lowten, the agent who had hunted up evidence in the case of the Princess of Wales, was employed in this equally savoury case.†

There is a piquancy in the following scene which Colonel MacMahon described to the House of Commons:

"In consequence of an anonymous note that was written to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, promising very important communications, I did, at the command of the Prince, lightly as he treated the note, nevertheless call at No. 14, Bedford Row, Russell Square, where the note was dated from. I was conducted upstairs, where I saw the lady, whose name I was told to be Farquhar. The lady in perfect good humour came out and received me, and entered into a conversation of so general and so extraordinary a nature, that I am confident this House would not for one moment entertain it, because the tendency and intention of it was to make bad blood between two illustrious brothers, whose affections could never be shaken by any such representation; at least, I am confident that the illustrious person I have the pride and glory to serve and love, would be incapable. She then told me she would show me letters to prove and to establish that there was a hatred on one part to the other: I declined seeing any letters. In this interview, at first, I stated that she was a friend of Mrs. Clarke; she said, certainly she knew Mrs. Clarke extremely intimately, that there was nobody

* See the letter given by Mr. Cyrus Redding, who furnishes some curious details in this and other matters.

† The names Dowler, Wardle, Lowten, were later adopted by the author of "Pickwick" from this very case.

she loved and regarded as she did Mrs. Clarke; that she perfectly knew her. She then asked me if I knew Mrs. Clarke. I said I do not. 'Do you know her, sir, by person?' I said, I believed not. 'Do you know her by character?' Yes, said I, her fame is very celebrated. I said, 'I am confident I am addressing myself to Mrs. Clarke herself.' She laughed, and said, 'I am Mrs. Clarke.' I then begged her a thousand pardons for the portrait I had drawn, but disclaimed being the painter. 'I am sure you are not, for it was Adam and Greenwood that gave you my character.' She stated to me that Mr. Adam had called u- her, and in a very firm, but steady manner, told her that the Duke of York, if she retired into the country, and conducted herself with propriety and decorum, would allow her £400 a year; that she had accordingly so retired into Devonshire for several months, but failing to receive the remittances she expected, she had been driven to town for the purpose of gaining her arrear. Upon the fairness of this statement, supposing it to be true (I do not pretend to say what my opinion of it was), I said, if your statement, Mrs. Clarke, is correct and orthodox, I will certainly wait upon Mr. Adam, and state it to him, to know where the objection lies to the payment of your annuity. I had the honour of waiting upon the Duke of York, and telling his royal highness exactly what she had stated, not pretending to vouch for its veracity in any shape whatever. His royal highness's immediate and prompt answer to me was, her conduct is so abominable that I will hear nothing at all about her. Anything I could possibly offer after what I have now said would be superfluous; there is the conclusion, that is the epilogue of anything I have to state."

It would be beside the purpose of this work to deal with the voluminous trial; but a single passage in one of the Duke's own letters to the lady is convincing: a colonel "is mistaken in thinking that any new regiments are to be raised. It is not intended; only second battalions to the existing corps. You had, therefore, better tell him so, and that you were sure there would be no use in applying for him."

Further, the contents of Mrs. Clarke's desk disclosed the most extraordinary collection of these corrupt applications from officers, soldiers, footmen, and divines.*

* One clergyman had preached before the King and Queen at Weymouth, and with such success that the newspapers declared that "his lips were touched with a live coal from the altar," and the royal family were melted into tears. A passage in the Duke's letters explains how this honour was attained. "Dr. —— called upon me yesterday morning and delivered me your letter. He wishes much to preach before royalty, and if I can put him in the way of it I will. God bless you!" adds the Duke.

It was unfortunate that the matter should have turned into a party question. It was believed that Wardle himself was not immaculate, and was put forward by the more respectable Radicals who, except Mr. Whitbread, were cautious enough in the treatment of the matter. On the other hand, the Ministry affected to believe it was an attack on the Court and Constitution, and their enemies said they were secretly delighted at an event which completely diverted public attention from mistakes of their foreign policy. But to Mr. Perceval the accused may be said to have owed "unearthing of the really damning part of the case. Having discovered that a compromising letter was lost, he recollected a favourite device at Nisi Prius, and vauntingly put forward the person whom it would have compromised, challenging examination. A most dramatic scene followed. By the arts of cross-examination the truth was wrung from the witness that this letter was in existence. He was sent with the messengers of the House to his bureau, whence he returned with a whole mail of letters.

Even the judgment of Sir A. Wellesley, then in Ireland as secretary, and likely to be influenced by *esprit de corps,* is decidedly against his chief. As the force of the evidence was cumulative, and all details pointing in the same direction,

Mrs. Clarke's "footboy," who waited and cleaned plate, etc., actually received a commission. Indeed, the picture of society that was unconsciously painted during this investigation would have delighted a cynic.

Mr. Donovan, who seems to have acted as a sort of broker for the system, writes in behalf of another reverend gentleman, who is willing to give £1000 for the Deanery of Hereford, just then vacant. So also with another clergyman, who was anxious to get the Deanery of Salisbury; "and a party of ladies, unknown to him, and headed by a well-known countess, subscribed 3000 guineas. He was chaplain to the Duke of Gloucester, and would be strongly recommended by many persons of fashion, and the Bishops of Norwich and Salisbury." After waiting three months this divine took the extraordinary course of calling on the Duke of Portland, leaving the following letter:

"My Lord Duke,

"I wished particularly to see your Grace upon the most private business. I cannot be fully open by Letter. The object is, to solicit your Grace's recommendation to the Deanery of Salisbury, or some other Deanery, for which the most ample pecuniary remuneration I will instantly give a draft to your Grace.

"For Salisbury, Three Thousand Pounds.——I hope your Grace will pardon this, and instantly commit these lines to the flames.——I am now writing, for the benefit of Administration, a most interesting Pamphlet. Excuse this openness; and I remain your Grace's

"Most obedient and obliged Servant,

"T. Basely.

"P.S.—I will attend your Grace whenever you may appoint, but sincerely beg your Grace's secrecy."

all denials and vindications on the ground of the Duke's character, became comparatively of no avail. It was brought out that he was negotiating a loan for £70,000 through one Kennett, to reward whose exertions he was ineffectually trying to obtain places and offices of trust.

But what is more interesting for us, is the behaviour of the Prince. This was of course marked with his usual vacillation. At first, with one of his rather generous impulses, he espoused his brother's side *corps et âme*. Adam, his factotum, went about showing a letter of the Prince's, in which it was stated that he would consider "an attack upon the Duke an attack upon himself." After a time, however, the Prince saw that he could not safely indulge his fraternal feelings, and determined to take no part in the business whatever. What his views were may be gathered from the following dramatic conversation reported by Lord Temple:

"On Sunday, February 26th, upon my entering the room, and inquiring after his health, he said he was well, but worried to death. He then made me sit down, and told me he wished to converse with me on the horrible scene that was passing. Upon my expressing my humble thanks for his condescension in permitting me to approach him at such a moment, and upon such a subject, and my earnest wish to learn what his opinions and feelings were, so far as he would allow me to hear them, he told me that I could easily guess what his feelings must be at seeing this attack made upon his family at the moment when he was mounting the throne; that his opinions were that his brother had brought all this upon himself, that he had behaved shabbily to the woman to whom he had promised an allowance which, small as it was, he had not paid; that a 'gentleman's word was sacred, and that he could not talk of his honour as a Prince, who could not keep his promise as a gentleman;' that he had no wishes upon the subject, as he was determined not to interfere one way or the other. He had not been consulted either by the King, the Duke, or the ministers; and therefore he would not meddle in the matter. That his brother had not thanked him even for communicating to him through MacMahon an anonymous letter which he had received, as appeared afterwards, from Mrs. Clarke, warning him of what had since happened; that ministers he detested, and would have nothing to say to them; and that from his father he had received no communication; that one of his sisters had written to pump him, and to her he had given no answer; and that the Duke of Cumberland had called upon him for the same purpose, to whom he had plainly said, that if the King wished to hear his sentiments, he would not communicate them to him through a third person.

"He said he considered the letter sent to the House of Commons as a most ill-advised measure, that it was a breach of privilege, and could not fail of calling the attention of Parliament; that he knew the circumstances attending the transaction; that the Cabinet had written a letter for the Duke, notifying to the House of Commons his resignation, but that the Duke had positively refused to sign it; that he had sent another form to the Cabinet, which they refused to agree to, and in their turn had sent a third, which was presented.*

"I hereupon ventured to express my joy that he had determined to adopt the line he had suggested to me, that the times were tremendous, and that, however harsh it might appear to his ears, as an honest man I must tell him, the opinion of the country was taken as to the Duke, and that its eyes were now turned upon him; that if he pursued the line he had mentioned, he would be carried to the throne upon the shoulders of his people; whereas, if he joined in saving the Duke, provided his guilt appeared manifest, my firm opinion was, that he would have a struggle. In confirmation of this, I mentioned all I knew of the ferment raised in the country, the City of London, and in Westminster, and what was nightly the language in the debating societies.

"Of all this he said he was aware, but he could not rise upon his brother's fall, that vigorous measures must be resorted to, for the purpose of keeping the people in order, and mentioned the old Sedition Bills. I told him he must pardon me, such measures could not and must not be resorted to. The tranquillity of his people depended upon Parliament doing its duty, and his forbearance. He said that was true, and, however bitter the pill, it must be swallowed, but that the debating clubs must be kept in order. The occasion of the whole of this cry was Mrs. Clarke's becoming the instrument of the printers against whom prosecutions were pending on the Duke's behalf, and that Wardle, Folkestone, and Whitbread were at the bottom of the conspiracy. I said the real conspirators were the ministers, who, looking only to their own places, had, to secure momentary popularity, thrown the ball loose, and could not catch it again, and had put up the son of their King into a pillory for everybody to pelt and insult.

"He agreed with me, and said that if Pitt or Fox had been alive this would not have happened, and that if Lord Grenville had been minister he would never have suffered it. I replied that if Lord Grenville had been minister, or if Lord Grey had remained in the House of Commons, this would not have happened; that if the Duke had been guilty, his guilt would not have been

* That this is accurate is shown by Lord Colchester's "Diary."

screened, but that the peace of the country and the security of his crown would not have been put into hazard.

"To all this he assented. He said, however, it was hard that a man should be condemned without trial, and expressed his hope that an impeachment would be the measure resorted to. I told him it was my duty to tell him that I did not think that would be the case. I had not at all made up my mind upon the evidence, the whole of which I was not master of, but that I had no hesitation in saying that there was nothing which could implicate the Duke as participator, either directly or indirectly, in Mrs. Clarke's corruption. He said then that the Duke ought to have resigned, and have taken the chance of reappointment in case of his innocence being proved.

"He asked whether I thought there was any way of bringing the matter before the House of Peers. I told him certainly not—that ministers had now put the thing out of their own control, that it must take its chance and its course; that the cup must be drunk, and that all that could be done was to take care that he (the Prince) should not be forced to drink the dregs, and that that would be best avoided by his stoutly persevering in the line he had laid down, to take no part. I concluded by telling him that this neither would nor should be a party business. He then put an end to the conversation by the warmest expressions of kindness to myself, by authorising me to say that he meant to keep an exact and a bonâ-fide neutrality, but expressing his hope that it would be recollected that the attack was made upon the throne, and that an attack upon the throne was an attack upon the vital principles of the country. We parted with many expressions on his part of thanks, etc.

"My conviction is that his alarm is very great, that he thinks extremely ill of the Duke's case, and is ready to give him up, if he could think that he would be supported in so doing, and that the fall of the Duke would not necessarily include a victory gained by the Republican party."

Such was this characteristic scene. No wonder the Prince was disgusted; on the other side he was being pressed by the King and the Court, who were in an agony of mind on account of the anxiety and impending disgrace. The Queen was writing to him, imploring him to come forward and shield his brother—that the King's life and health were in the balance. But the Prince was not to be moved. He determined to send his henchman, MacMahon, to vote for the Duke, to show that his master did not condemn his brother. But the votes he commanded, such as the Duke of Norfolk's and Duke of Northumberland's, he declined to interfere with.

At last, on February 23rd, the Speaker read an appeal from the Duke to the House:

"Horse Guards, Feb. 23rd, 1809.

"SIR,

"I have waited with the greatest anxiety until the Committee appointed by the House of Commons to inquire into my conduct as Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's Army had closed its examinations, and I now hope that it will not be deemed improper to address this letter through you to the House of Commons.

"I observe with the deepest concern that in the course of this inquiry my name has been coupled with transactions the most criminal and disgraceful; and I must ever regret and lament that a connection should ever have existed which has thus exposed my character and honour to public animadversion.

"With respect to my alleged offence, connected with the discharge of my official duties, I do, in the most solemn manner, upon my honour as a prince, distinctly assert my innocence, not only by denying all corrupt participation in any of the infamous transactions which have appeared in evidence at the bar of the House of Commons, or any connivance at their existence, but also the slightest knowledge or suspicion that they existed at all.

"My consciousness of innocence leads me confidently to hope that the House of Commons will not, upon such evidence as they have heard, adopt any proceedings prejudicial to my honour and character; but if, upon such testimony as has been adduced against me, the House of Commons can think my innocence questionable, I claim of their justice that I should not be condemned without trial, or be deprived of the benefit and protection which is afforded to every British subject by those sanctions, under which alone evidence is received in the ordinary administration of the law.

"I am, Sir, yours,

"FREDERIC."

This appeal did not stay the march of the impeachment. This letter had been settled by the Cabinet, who in their private councils were much embarrassed as to what course to take. Lord Melville—whose own turn was to come a little later—thought the position so serious that he suggested, that after passing judgment, the House should deliver a homily to the royal brothers generally, with a hope that the unfortunate transaction might convince the various members that "right and decorous conduct" was essentially necessary. The most emphatic condemnation of the whole course taken came from Canning. His

opinion all through was the sagacious one: that the Duke should have resigned after the charges were made, and have retired until he was cleared.*

On March 20th, the ministers succeeded in carrying the acquittal of the Duke on the charges of corruption with a mild rebuke, which was in an encomium, for the third resolution gave praise to his exemplary conduct in the discharge of his official duties, with an allusion to the regret and concern expressed by his royal highness, and "a confidence that his future life," etc. This, however, would scarcely clear him with the public, and he at once resigned. It is amusing to find what view the Chancellor took of it. "While we were sitting together," he says, "a messenger arrived from Windsor with one of the most affecting letters from the King to his servants, enclosing another of the most affecting letters of the Duke of York to his father, I ever read, the latter offering the Duke's resignation, the former accepting it. People, as far as I have seen anybody, seem affected by this step, but whether the 'Bloodhounds of St. Stephen's,'" etc.‡

Lord Dundas, a decayed veteran, was appointed in his place till the matter should be forgotten, which it speedily was, all interest being absorbed in the new struggle now at hand. It is pleasant to find that on the eve of the poor King's last aberration of mind, from which he never recovered, that his son should have addressed the following becoming and affectionate message. After signifying his concurrence in the King's choice of Archdeacon Short as Sub-Preceptor, the Prince proceeds:

"I cannot conclude this letter without expressing to your Lordship the sincere gratification with which I have received, through your Lordship, his Majesty's sentiments respecting this most interesting subject: and I trust to the very particular attention which has marked your Lordship's proceedings through the whole of this business, to take the most suitable course of conveying to the King, with the most profound respect and duty on my part, the feelings with which I am impressed on this occasion by his Majesty's most gracious and condescending attention to me.

"I am, my Lord, very sincerely yours,

"GEORGE P.

"Carlton House, May 8th, 1810."

* See his admirable letter, "Life of Perceval," i. 323.

† "Life of Lord Eldon," ii. 71.

CHAPTER II.

1810—1811.

Toward the autumn of the year 1810 there were symptoms that the aged King, now half blind, was fast hurrying to a renewed attack of his old illness. The more remote cause was the semi-religious agitation due to the dread of the Catholic claims. This itself seemed mania. But what plunged him into insanity was the fatal illness of his loved daughter, the Princess Amelia, whose last touching words: "Remember me, but do not grieve for me," must have helped the stroke. She died on November 2nd.

The illness of this amiable Princess, only twenty-seven years of age, caused much anxiety in her own family, by whom she was tenderly beloved. This is shown by an interesting unpublished letter:

PRINCESS MARY TO MRS. ANNE SMITH.

"Augusta Lodge, Windsor,
"January the 9th, 1810.

"My dear Mrs. Anne Smith,

"I wish it was in my power to send you as good an account of dear Amelia as all those who love her must pray for. I think I may venture to say that she certainly is not worse since Sir H. Halford and Baillie have been called in; and, as they are gone, I trust I may add, the new plan does not disagree; but, until the constant pain in the side is removed, I never can feel happy about her. She has very unfortunately got cold this last week, which Sir H. Halford still hopes to keep off her lung. Amelia desires her most affectionate love, and begs me to say how much she is obliged to you for all the kind inquiries you have made at different times after her, and how happy she shall be to see you whenever she is well enough, but now she is

unequal to seeing anybody but her own family, and . . . . both Sir H. Halford and Baillie declared much depended on it. I hope you are quite well, and your little boy likewise. I am sure Adolphus will be very sorry he was not at home when her Grace called. God bless you, and believe me,

"Your affectionate Friend,
"Mary."

In these troubles the Princess of Wales came to offer her sympathy, and thus describes her reception:

THE PRINCESS OF WALES TO A FRIEND.

"Dear ———,

"I am in a state of rage, being just returned from a visit to the Queen, who received me in a most cavalier manner. Luckily I restrained myself whilst in her august presence; but I could have abused her gloriously, so angry did I feel at the old Begum. I will not submit again in a hurry to such a reception. She never asked me to sit down. Imagine such a piece of ridiculous pride! And when I asked after my poor dear uncle, and said I should like to see him, she made me for answer, 'The King is quite well, but he will not see you.' I replied, 'Madame, I shall ask his Majesty himself;" she said *noting*, but smiled her abominable smile of derision.

"Talking of kings and queens, I heard the other day, from a lady who lives a good deal at court and with courtiers, that a most erroneous opinion is formed in general of the Princess E——. The good-humour for which she has credit is only an outward show, and this is exemplified in her conduct to the poor Princess A——, who is dying—quite given over, though her decay may be slow and tedious. The Princess —— and S—— are devoted to her; but Princess E—— treats her with the most cruel unkindness and ill-temper. So much for court gossip. Thank God, I do not live with them! Everybody believes Princess A—— is married to Mr. F——y, and they say she has confessed her marriage to the King, who is miserable at his expected loss of his daughter, who is his favourite; and I do not wonder, for she always appeared to me the most amiable of the whole set. So she is destined to be taken away. Well—perhaps it is as happy for her, *poor ting*, that she should; for there is not much felicity, I believe, amidst dem all. When I left the royal presence, I thought to myself, You shall not catch me here again in a hurry. No, truly, I would rather have *noting* to do with *de* royal family, and be treated as a cipher, than be subject to such haughtiness as I was shown to-day."

So early as October 25th, the old "hurries" and excited utterances showed that the disease had returned with some severity. Colonel Willis was sent for by the Prince on November 1st to Windsor, "to make some arrangements about wine for the Queen at Frogmore,"—Willis belonging to the Board of Green Cloth. He then talked freely of the situation. He said that the King was as ill as ever, that the Chancellor and Lord Wellesley had called him out of bed in the morning to tell him of the serious condition of the King. He added the significant remark, speaking "emphatically," that "there are times that require the entire vigour of Government, while its whole vigour cannot be exerted, and you must see that the present state of things cannot add to the strength of the present ministry." He then went to dine with the Queen. He returned about eight o'clock, with the Duke of Cumberland, "whose behaviour and conversation, as was indeed to be expected, was of a nature as to coarseness as would have disgraced one of his own grooms." The Prince seemed suspicious of the designs of the ministers, though a letter sent by Mr. Perceval to inform him of what had been done in Parliament, gratified him. He was in spirits, talked of a variety of subjects, and gave an imitation of Grattan that Colonel Willis thought "would have done credit to the best actor of the day." The company broke up at midnight. The poor Princess died on the same day!

The painful task remained of communicating the sad news to the old King. When Sir Henry Halford, the physician, came to break it to him, he anticipated him, saying: "I know what you would tell me, my poor girl is dead." But a more delicate duty remained. It was believed by the public that she had left a number of small bequests to her friends, to discharge which she had directed that all her jewels and trinkets should be sold. But "The Prince of Wales," said the newspapers, "which is another proof of the benignity of his mind, took upon himself to pay her debts and legacies, and presented the jewels and other ornaments to Princess Mary." "Benignity of mind" was, however, scarcely the motive. The truth was that she had bequeathed all her little property to a friend, and so unusual a disposition gave rise to gossip.

It has long been believed that this amiable Princess was secretly married, and that on her death-bed she confided the story to her father. Of this there can be little doubt. Captain, afterwards General Fitzroy, was the person to whom she was thus espoused, to whom she had formed an attachment when thrown in his society at Weymouth and other places. We find the Princess repeating that "every one believes that Princess Amelia is married to Mr. Fitzroy." And the lady whom he subsequently married,

and who survived him, often talked freely of the matter to persons now living. Nay, it has been confidently asserted that all, or nearly all, her sisters had contracted similar alliances with persons in private stations. Colonel Garth, it has been stated, was one thus distinguished, also a well-known physician of the Court, though on no foundation.

The following lines were written by her a little before her death:

Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laugh'd, and danc'd, and talk'd, and sung;
And proud of health, of freedom vain,
Dream'd not of sorrow, care, or pain;
Concluding, in those hours of glee,
That all the world was made for me.
But when the hour of trial came,
When sickness shook this trembling frame,
When folly's gay pursuits were o'er,
And I could dance and sing no more;
It then occurr'd, how sad 'twould be,
Were this world only made for me.

The original MS. was sold not long since at a public auction.

Sir H. Halford, who was now to take a leading, though not conspicuous, part in the transactions that followed, was one of those adroit physicians whom a court training forms, and of which there has been a regular succession about the English royal family. He had the confidence of the Queen and her family, and was employed in many delicate matters. The Queen dared not; Perceval and the Chancellor successively undertook the disclosure and shrank from it, imposing it on Sir Henry. "Never," he told Miss Wynne, "can he forget the feelings with which, having requested some private conversation with the King after the other physicians were gone, he was called into a window, with the light falling so full on his countenance, that even the poor nearly blind King could see it. He asked whether it would be agreeable to him to hear now how Princess Amelia had disposed of her little property. 'Certainly, certainly; I want to know,' with great eagerness. Sir Henry reminded him at the beginning of his illness he had appointed Fitzroy to ride with her; how he had left him with her at Weymouth; how it was natural and proper that she should leave him some tokens for these services; that excepting jewels she had nothing to leave, and had bequeathed them all to him; that the Prince of Wales, thinking jewels a very inappropriate bequest for a man, had given Fitzroy a pecuniary compensation for them (his family, by-the-bye, always said it was very inadequate), and had distributed slight tokens to all the attendants and friends of the Princess, giving the bulk of the jewels to

Princess Mary, her most constant and kindest of nurses. Upon this the poor King exclaimed: 'Quite right and proper.'" *

It will be seen, too, how adroitly the physician contrived to steer his course between the Queen and Princes.

During the last years of the poor King's decay it is curious to note how an old romance had been called up, and added one more to his other delusions. Some fifty years before there had walked at his coronation a lovely young creature, just married —the fair Lady Pembroke—who seems to have then made a deep impression on his heart. This, through the long interval, had been well-nigh effaced, or consigned to the limbo of boyish fancies, until his recovery from the attack of derangement in 1787, when his family were surprised by his recurring to this *penchant*. The lady was then a mature matron.

Talking with Mrs. Harcourt, the dissatisfied Duke of Gloucester declared that "he had heard of a wicked plot of the Prince to gain over Lady P—— and govern the King through her, thus oversetting the Queen's influence. They had kept it out of their papers, but now they had disposed of his silence a few squibs had appeared.† It was at the Windsor Court that this *penchant* was manifested.‡

There is a strange tragic interest in the introduction of the physician who alone seemed to have possessed the art of restraining the royal patient. The Willises, as Dr. John Willis told Mr. Julian Young when an octogenarian, had excited the anger of the Prince by not allowing him access to the King, and also that of the Queen. When this new attack came on, the royal family

* I have heard it stated, too, that after receiving the jewels from the too-confiding Fitzroy, the Prince turned his back on him at the next levee.

† "Diary," p. 42.

‡ Sir G. Elliot, writing to his wife, said: "That the Queen seemed uneasy, and tried to prevent it as often as she could; but that the Queen being at last engaged with somebody in conversation the King slipped away from her, and got to the other end of the room where Lady Pembroke was, and that Lady Pembroke seemed distressed." "One day," Sir H. Halford told Miss Wynne, "when the King fancied himself surrounded by servants only, and when a medical attendant was watching unseen, he took a glass of wine and water and drank to the health *conjugis meæ dilectissimæ Elizabethæ*, meaning Lady Pembroke. Here was a delusion clearly established and noted down immediately: the use of Latin, which was not to be understood by those whom he supposed only to hear him, affording a singular proof of the odd cunning of insanity. A few days after, Sir Henry was walking with him on the terrace. He began talking of the Lutheran religion, of its superiority to that of the Church of England, and ended with growing so vehement, that he really ranted forth its praise without mentioning that which Sir Henry believes to have been the real motive of this preference—the left-handed marriages allowed."

at once thought of Willis, and the Chancellor came to him to say it was necessary he should attend. The other firmly refused, alleging the dislike with which he was regarded at Court. On which he was surprised one morning, when sitting down to breakfast in his house at Bolton, by seeing the carriage of the Regent drive up. The Prince entered, put on his most seductive and gracious manner, talked of everything that was amusing, and invited himself to breakfast. After that meal was over he came to business. "Putting his hand affectionately on my knee, he said: 'Old friend and faithful servant, I have risen early from my bed that I may have the satisfaction of saying *Peccavi!* . . . . The truth is, I have long felt angry with you, and I will tell you why. The last time the King was under your charge I was staggered by seeing a board with these words printed in large characters: "No one to pass this way without permission from John Willis, M.D." Knowing the objection the Queen had to my seeing my father, I fancied there must be some understanding between her Majesty and yourself as to my exclusion. The Chancellor, however, has explained everything to me. He assures me that the notice was never intended to apply to me or my brother.' And he then added, that after this explanation he hoped they would be friends. Touched by such condescension," goes on the doctor, "I knelt down, kissed his hand, and attempted to falter forth my gratitude. During his breakfast the Prince was playful and jocose."

The result was that the doctor proceeded once more to Windsor. He found his way to his old quarters, where the King was, the servants looking at him askance. He was ascending the stairs when he heard the sound of singing and whistling, and presently the figure of the King was seen arrayed in the blue coat, star, cocked hat, and top-boots, so familiar from pictures all over the kingdom. He had a whip, with which he was switching his boots carelessly. At the sight of the doctor he gave a piteous shriek: "Oh! John Willis again! God help me!" and fell on the ground in a fit.

The confusion and embarrassment caused by the King's malady may be conceived, and each party, helped by the experience of twenty years before, determined to take every advantage that was offered. The Queen and Court had begun by trying to conceal the illness, so that Lord Grenville, who, on October 26th met the poor King riding, heard him talking so loud and fast as to be remarked at a considerable distance.

The Queen knew her power and the advantages of her situation and determined to use them. With her son in her own camp and bent on carrying out his own aims, it may be conceived how

painful was the state of things at Windsor. The position of the Prince of Wales attracted all eyes, and, indeed, was an embarrassing one. At first, recollecting the inconvenience and ill-success of the course he had before pursued, he had determined on the rather selfish one of remaining passive. When, on November 1st, the Chancellor came to condole with him on the state of things, the Prince said coldly: "He had only to lament it—it was for the King's servants to act." And the Duke of York reported to Mr. Perceval that his brother had told him, "he intended to be very moderate in all his proceedings;" while Lord Bulkely later on had heard that he was "very secret, guarded, and *boutonné*." Such behaviour offended his "friends," who complained that "his conduct was not such as would benefit his interest. It professes not to interfere, and at the same time expresses a wish and hope that his friends will support his object. No object can be supported unless it is avowed." Still he had expressly given authority for saying that "he abhorred the present men."

It would appear, however, that this "game" failed, and that the Queen and Mr. Perceval were not to be won. They had determined to follow the course of 1789, and had no idea of leaving the Prince unfettered, more particularly as they now knew or suspected that his feelings to the more respectable wing of the Liberals had cooled. There were great delays however before he could be allowed to see their hand, for Parliament met on November 1st, and the debate was put off by successive adjournments until December 12th; during which interval it was announced that all was going on well "in that quarter, viz. the Prince's side, but that the cabal was rising rapidly, and was now become a scene of violent intrigue;" while the Duke of Cumberland went about praising the Prince for his "prudent and temperate conduct," adding that he had seen none of the Opposition, that he had no objection to the present ministry, and insinuating very strongly that his behaviour in case of a regency would depend on theirs towards the Prince—that he should expect to be treated like a gentleman, and not like a ruffian. In addition, a correspondent of Lord Auckland's was of opinion that our present rulers were sagacious, and he forecasted that they should see Sheridan and Perceval "hand in glove." Lord Moira, who talked unguardedly in the first week of November, declared that the Prince did not mean to remove the present ministry, but "merely to introduce a friend into the Cabinet."*

All these remarkable confessions showed pretty convincingly what the early intentions of the Prince were, and how they were

* R. P. Ward, "Diary," i. 299.

anticipated. But now, on the 19th of December, he received a disagreeable surprise in the shape of a communication from the minister, which showed him that his moderate behaviour had been in vain. He learned that he was to be tied and fettered by restrictions, almost the same as those which had caused him so much annoyance before.

The Prince did not throw away a single chance, and the Government complained of his open canvassing. The Duke of Cumberland assured one lord that it would be highly agreeable to the King if he voted against the restrictions. The other replied that that seemed strange, as the first act of the King, after his recovery in 1789, was to thank him heartily for the way in which he had defended his interests.*

The restrictions were these: 1. From making peers. 2. Granting offices in reversion or pensions. 3. The King's property to lie in trustees. 4. The care of the King to be entrusted to the Queen and a Council. To this he replied:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. PERCEVAL.

"Carlton House, Wednesday Evening, December 19, 1810.

"The Prince acknowledges the receipt of Mr. Perceval's detailed statement of those measures which, Mr. Perceval informs him, his Majesty's confidential servants have decided to submit to the Lords and Commons now assembled, as the means of providing for the exercise of the royal authority, should the King's indisposition unhappily be protracted.

"The Prince, though fully sensible of the attention of this early communication, cannot but in some degree feel embarrassed by it, inasmuch as it rests not with him to judge, nor does he deem himself entitled to assume, how far the wisdom of the two Houses of Parliament may think it advisable for the public welfare to adopt the plan communicated by Mr. Perceval. Were it not for this difficulty, the Prince would refer Mr. Perceval to the Prince's answer to Mr. Pitt's letter on the 30th of December, 1788, that letter containing the outlines of the plan intended then to be acted upon by his Majesty's confidential servants. But the Prince thinks it essential to observe that that communication was not made by Mr. Pitt till after the two Houses of Parliament had come to certain resolutions as the groundwork of that plan. That answer remains on record, and, as the sentiments contained in it were founded on a solemn contemplation of the principles of the British Constitution, as well as an earnest desire

* Ward, "Diary," i. 306.

to be able conscientiously to discharge the functions of government in behalf of his beloved and revered father and sovereign, in such a manner as might best satisfy his Majesty's well-known and constant anxiety for the advantage and honour of his people, the Prince has only to declare that these sentiments admit of no change.

"The Prince cannot conclude without expressing his deep affliction at the melancholy event which has rendered his communication from Mr. Perceval necessary, and without declaring that it will be the happiest moment of the Prince's life to be enabled, by the restoration of his Majesty's health, instantly to deposit at his feet those powers (and he trusts unimpaired) which the Constitution has pronounced to be inseparable from the exercise of the royal authority."

On the same day the following was drawn up :

"Carlton House, Wednesday Night, 12 o'clock,
"December 19, 1810.

"SIR,

"The Prince of Wales having assembled the whole of the male branches of the royal family, and having communicated to us the plan, intended to be proposed by his Majesty's confidential servants to the Lords and Commons, for the establishment of a restricted Regency, should the continuance of his Majesty's ever-to-be-deplored illness render it necessary, we feel it a duty we owe to his Majesty, to our country, and to ourselves, to enter our solemn protest against measures that we consider as perfectly unconstitutional, as they are contrary to, and subversive of, the principles which seated our family upon the throne of these realms.

"FREDERICK, "WILLIAM,
"EDWARD, "ERNEST,
"AUGUSTUS FREDERICK, "ADOLPHUS FREDERICK,
"WILLIAM FREDERICK."

On the following day the House met and the three resolutions debated, namely, the incapacity of the King, the right of the House to supply for it, and the mode of giving the royal assent. The last resolution constituted "the Phantom," namely, the investing the Great Seal with a kingly magic.

On January 1 the restrictions were debated, and to the great delight of the Opposition ; for, a proposition that there should be no restrictions was defeated by only twenty-four votes. This

defeat became a victory when it was proposed to entrust the entire household to the Queen, the Opposition being willing only to concede to her the direction of such officials as were necessary "for the care of the King's person." In the House of Lords ministers sustained defeats. It was agreed that there was a certain stupidity and want of sense in their tactics, for when they found the Prince in so favourable a mood they might have been expected to conciliate him. This view is also supported by what he allowed to escape him to Lord Wellesley, now one of his ardent friends, who waited on him to explain that he had voted for the restrictions from principle. He became angry, "and expressed his concern and surprise that any friend of his could suppose he took his proffered restrictions well, but he could not help feeling, then, a personal want of confidence in himself which he did not deserve, and therefore took it personally ill of the ministry; that it would have been the pride of his heart if the King recovered to restore things to him as much as possible in the same state as he found them, without being restricted to do so, but that the ministers had now by their conduct rendered that impossible." The date of this utterance was early in January. Considering that Lord Wellesley was then one of the ministry it is scarcely surprising that this visit caused some talk. The Prince is said to have dismissed him abruptly with the remark that he had business and would not keep him from his dinner.*

Accordingly, we are not surprised to find the Prince thrown again into relation with his old friends of the Opposition and in earnest communication with the two leaders, "Lords G. and G.," as they were often spoken of in letters of the time—Grey and Grenville—solemn unbending figures that would have appeared uncongenial to the debonair Prince, who desired not to be teased, and above all not to be solemnly lectured. Even to the general reader these two nobles always appear to come on the scene in pedagoguish fashion, with long and solemn letters, arriving from "Dropmore" and "Howick," returning home to those residences after many a bootless errand.

Lord Grey, who had left town at the close of the debates, now returned. On his road he had been met by letters informing him that "the Prince had at last sent for Lord Grenville, and had also required his presence."† Both anticipated being called to power.

The Prince could not have been in the best of humours with Lord Grenville, who had just voted for one of the restrictions,

* "Life of Lord Grey," p. 265. † Ward, "Diary," i. 323.

after first voting against them, on some refinement. His position was embarrassing, as on the last Regency question he had taken a different course. But they were little prepared for the rebuff they were to receive almost at starting. That Sheridan had been the real moving influence through all these transactions was now to be shown in rather a mortifying way. Lord Grey himself tells the story of this first shipwreck, and the bitterness of his tone will be noted.

Writing to Lady Grey, on January 12th, he says: "I told you that Sheridan was acting in his usual spirit of mischief. The Prince had referred it to Lord Grenville and me to draw up an answer to the two Houses. We had prepared one accordingly, with some difficulty in reconciling our different opinions on the subject of restrictions. Lord Grenville, however, gave way as much as I thought necessary, and the answer, though it certainly needed correction, would, I think, with such corrections as might easily have been made, have done very well. I read it to the Prince on Thursday evening, saying I was at Holland's, ready to receive his commands if he wished for any alterations. Instead of taking this course he set to work with Sheridan and Adam after dinner to examine it; and the former, after pulling it to pieces, paragraph by paragraph, finally persuaded the Prince to reject it, and to substitute one of his own. They came to me with the information of this result at Holland's between eleven and twelve, and desired me to read the answer that had been agreed upon. I did so, saying that I should do nothing more; that as the Prince had rejected the answer which I had framed with Lord Grenville, I could not concur in framing another, and that my opinion of that proposed was, that it was, in its whole tenour and character, utterly objectionable. I added that the Prince had certainly a right to adopt the answer which he approved most of, but that it must be understood that it was adopted without the concurrence of Lord Grenville and myself, and that we could not be responsible for it. Sheridan attempted some discussion, which I declined, seeing that he was pursuing it in a way which I thought extremely improper, and feeling that I could not very well command my temper. I therefore, after expressing these opinions, remained very silent, and showed what I hear he has represented, with less departure from the truth than usual, a good deal of haughtiness and ill-humour. I afterwards remonstrated privately with Adam on the impropriety of having the advice which Lord Grenville and I were called upon to give subjected in this manner to the examination of an inferior Council, and stated that if such was to be the practice, I must decline giving any in future. . . . I heard from Lauderdale

that Sheridan afterwards resumed the discussion with Lord Holland, who expressed as strong an opinion upon the impropriety of the whole proceeding as possible. Yesterday morning I had a note from Adam, saying that he had been kept up till half-past three at Carlton House, and enclosing the answer which had been finally agreed upon. He called soon after, and then we went to Camelford House, from which place Lord Grenville and I sent a short note to the Prince.* We afterwards sent a long written representation on the treatment that we had received, where the matter now rests.

"In the course of the transaction Sheridan's lying and baseness have been beyond all description. Adam, on the contrary, has behaved as well as possible. Upon the whole I think it lucky that the thing has occurred, as it has given us in the outset an opportunity of meeting and repelling a danger to which we should have been continually liable. The answer you will see in the papers, with its puling phrases of 'reverential delicacy,' etc., in the style of a vulgar novel, but it is infinitely less objectionable, bad as it still is, than in the way in which it first appeared.'

"The stand thus taken by Lord Grey and Lord Grenville against the interference of secret advisers, seems to have greatly alarmed the Prince for the moment, and he called personally on Lord Holland the next day, and seemed, as Lord Holland wrote to Lord Grenville, "anxious to do away any unpleasant feelings on the subject of the answer to the resolution of the two Houses; and said he thought it best to have no more said on the subject. At the same time he observed, and authorised me and Adam to repeat to Lord Grey and you, that the misapprehension had arisen from the different views which he and you had taken of this stage of the proceeding: in which, according to his notions, you were not yet in a situation when his advisers would become strictly and constitutionally responsible, but which you had considered as placing you in that situation."

Of this explanation Lord Grey said, that it was "in fact acknowledging that he had no answer to give, and was, as anything would have been, short of defending the practice, sufficient for our satisfaction. What has happened will not, therefore, I think, be without its advantages."

There could be no doubt that the two lords had been treated

* "Lord Grey and Lord Grenville desire Mr. Adam to express on their part their dutiful acknowledgments to the Prince for the gracious communication of the answer which his Royal Highness intends making to the deputation from the two Houses this day. On the tenour of that answer it would be presumptuous in them to offer any opinion in a case where their advice is not required by his royal highness. January 11, 1811.

unceremoniously, and in their complaint they reminded the Regent that he had distinctly allotted to them the duty of preparing his answer, a task signifying they were his advisers, and spoke of his concern that their wish should have been submitted to the judgment of another person, by whose advice he was finally guided. Lord Lauderdale happened to be present when Sheridan was at his task, and heard Lord Holland remonstrate earnestly, saying that the two lords ought to have been sent for if objection was taken to their work. "Sheridan muttered something about his thinking that the Prince was not yet in a situation to have a responsible adviser, which was flatly contradicted."* And indeed there was so much dissatisfaction, that Sheridan on January the 15th addressed a vindication of himself to Lord Holland, which, if we can accept it, shows that the confusion arose from the vacillation of the Prince. "On Sunday the 7th, he says, he mentioned at Carlton House that the Prince ought to have his answer ready, and was told by Adam or Lord Moira, two of the 'intimate counsellors,' that the Prince had directed Lord Moira to prepare one. It then occurred to him that he would attempt a sketch of one, which on the Wednesday he read to the Prince. As it was rather artfully composed 'of expressions and sentiments which had fallen from the Prince himself in different conversations,' it naturally pleased. The Prince carelessly said that Lord Grenville had undertaken 'a sketch,' as had also Lord Moira. On his dining at Carlton House on Thursday the paper prepared by the two lords was shown to him. The Prince, however, who had read the noble lords' paper, proceeded to state how strongly he objected to almost every part of it. The draft delivered by Adam he took a copy of himself, as Mr. Adam read it, affixing shortly, but warmly, his comments to each paragraph. Finding his royal highness's objections to the whole radical and insuperable, and seeing no means myself by which the noble lords could change their draft, so as to meet the Prince's ideas, I ventured to propose, as the only expedient of which the time allowed, that both the papers should be laid aside, and that a very short answer indeed, keeping clear of all topics liable to disagreement, should be immediately sketched out and be submitted that night to the judgment of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville. The lateness of the hour prevented any but very hasty discussion, and Adam and myself proceeded, by his royal highness's orders, to your house to relate what had passed to Lord Grey. Before we left Carlton House, it was agreed beween Adam and myself that we were not to communicate to the noble lords the marginal comments of the Prince,

* General Grey, "Memoir," pp. 266, 439.

and we determined to withhold them. But at the meeting with Lord Grey, at your house, he appeared to me, erroneously perhaps, to decline considering the objections as coming from the Prince, but as originating in my suggestions. Upon this, I certainly called on Adam to produce the Prince's copy, with his notes, in his royal highness's own handwriting. Afterwards, finding myself considerably hurt at an expression of Lord Grey's, which could only be pointed at me, and which expressed his opinion that the whole of the paper, which he assumed me to be responsible for, was 'drawn up in an invidious spirit,' I certainly did, with more warmth than was perhaps discreet, comment on the paper proposed to be substituted; and there ended, with no good effect, our interview. Adam and I saw the Prince again that night, when his royal highness was graciously pleased to meet our joint and earnest request, by striking out from the draft of the answer, to which he still resolved to adhere, every passage which we conceived to be most liable to objection on the part of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville.

"On the next morning, Friday—a short time before he was to receive the address—when Adam returned from the noble lords, with their expressed disclaimer of the preferred answer altered as it was, his royal highness still persevered to eradicate every remaining word which he thought might yet appear exceptionable to them, and made further alterations, although the fair copy of the paper had been made out.

"Thus the answer, nearly reduced to the expression of the Prince's own suggestions, and without an opportunity of further meeting the wishes of the noble lords, was delivered by his royal highness."

More artfully directed was Sheridan's ridicule, and some well-known lines were admirably conceived to disgust the Prince with these advisers:

> Then, if he'll help us to pull down
> His father's dignity and crown,
> We'll make him, in some time to come,
> The greatest prince in Christendom.

The matter, however, was smoothed over, though it was hard to put up with such treatment, which was really significant of worse, in case power were to come to the Prince. Mr. Moore seems to think that this discussion led at once to the retention of the present ministers. To this it may have contributed, but indirectly. Now that the matter was made up, or "patched up," the Prince had engaged them to prepare arrangements for the new government; but, as we look closer into the transaction, it is impossible not to see how imperfect was what they proposed to

substitute for the existing system. In the first place the two lords were not agreed in their principles—Lord Grenville being for deriving some assistance from his opponents; Lord Grey thinking he could stand alone. Things had, indeed, nearly arrived at such a pass that the difficulties raised, as Lord Grey's son states, "more than once threatened to compel them to declare their inability to form a Government."* Nay, on the night of the 16th Lord Grey received a sort of manifesto from Lord Grenville, reaching to fifteen pages—one of those formidable documents of which the Prince stood in awe. Lord Grey owns that, had he sent an answer, "it might have endangered our connection, but in the course of the day they took fright, desired to withdraw the paper, and everything seems now more likely to go on well; but still there are difficulties. In the midst of all this turmoil I begin to feel that I am not, and ought not to be, afraid of them." In so happy and conciliatory a tone was this auspicious venture inaugurated. Add to this Sheridan and his friends plotting against the two lords—who will wonder that the Prince later declined to venture to sea in a craft so ill-formed?

On the 21st they were enabled to return answers to his questions, which were still not calculated to reassure him; and it will be noted the brusque uncompromising tone these awkward negotiations assumed. If he (the Prince) "was satisfied that the duties on which he was about to enter must, in all human probability, be of such duration as to impose on his royal highness an absolute necessity of exercising his own judgment on the policy and measures of the Government which he was called to administer;" in that case, the opinion they had always expressed of the system pursued during the last four years, founded, as it was, "on a full consideration of the state and interests of the country," would lead them to advise "an immediate and total change of public councils. Nor," they added, "would they decline to take upon themselves all the responsibility resulting from this opinion, if, upon full consideration, his royal highness should deem it expedient to carry this, their humble advice, into execution." In other words, a new and inglorious policy as regards the war was to be set on foot.

The day for reading this debated answer was now at hand; yet it was not ready.

In the secret councils of that eventful day and night, an amusing scene was taking place. Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor, a familiar figure in their circle, was sent for at about three o'clock on the morning the address was to be presented. He found the Prince, Sheridan, and Mr. Adam all

* "Life of Lord Grey," p. 271.

in consultation. The Prince showed him a rough draft of the address, asking him to make two fair copies, adding, in his own style: "Those damned fellows will be here in the morning." On Taylor's advice the Prince went to bed, while he himself proceeded with the task set to him. All the time Sheridan and Adam walked up and down, the latter occasionally stooping to whisper the scribe: "The damnedest rascal existing!" referring to his companion, while Sheridan would occasionally mutter: "Damn them all!" Taylor went home and repaired betimes to Carlton House, where he found the Prince in bed, but all the deputed members waiting below. "Are those damned fellows come?" his highness asked. "Yes, sir." After a little while came the ejaculation: "Damn them all!" Mr. Taylor was then directed to make fresh copies, as further alterations had been made.* This amusing scene shows what embarrassment reigned at Carlton House councils.†

* Taylor thus related it to Mr. Moore, who reprints it in his "Diary."

† "My Lords and Gentlemen,

"I receive the communication which the two Houses have directed you to make to me, of their joint resolutions on the subject of providing 'for the exercise of the royal authority during his Majesty's illness,' with those sentiments of regard which I must ever entertain for the united desires of the two Houses.

"With the same sentiments I receive the expressed 'hopes of the Lords and Commons, that, from my regard for the interests of his Majesty and the nation, I should be ready to undertake the weighty and important trust proposed to be involved in me,' under the restrictions and limitations stated in those resolutions.

"Conscious that every feeling of my heart would have prompted me, from dutiful affection to my beloved father and sovereign, to have shown all the reverential delicacy towards him inculcated in those resolutions, I cannot refrain from expressing my regret that I should not have been allowed the opportunity of manifesting to his afflicted and loyal subjects that such would have been my conduct.

"Deeply impressed, however, with the necessity of tranquillising the public mind, and determined to submit to every personal sacrifice consistent with the regard I owe to the security of my father's crown, and to the equal regard I owe to the welfare of his people, I do not hesitate to accept the office and situation proposed to me, restricted as they are, still retaining every opinion expressed by me upon a former and similar distressing occasion.

"In undertaking the trust proposed to me, I am well aware of the difficulties of the situation in which I shall be placed; but I shall rely with confidence upon the constitutional advice of an enlightened Parliament, and the zealous support of a generous and loyal people. I will use all the means left to me to merit both.

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"You will communicate this my answer to the two Houses, accompanied by my most fervent wishes and prayers, that the Divine will may extricate us and the nation from the grievous embarrassments of our present condition, by the speedy restoration of his Majesty's health."

After the address was presented at Carlton House, it was noticed that there was an attempt at state, the room being full of gentlemen and attendants, all the Princes present; the Prince of Wales in his chair, flanked on one side by his Chancellors (Mr. Adam and Lord Moira), on the other by Sheridan and the Duke of Cumberland—his equerries grouped behind. The Prince assumed a cold ceremonious manner, and as he read marked all the significant portions with "very peculiar emphasis." Turning now to Parliament, we find the answer to the address was considered an indifferent one. It amused the men in office to hear it abused by the distracted Opposition. Lord Erskine said to Mr. Ward that it was indifferent, and Lord Grey, in the House of Lords, asked Lord Liverpool what he thought of it. "Not much in matter or composition," was the answer. "That," said Lord Grey, with an air of satisfaction, "is exactly my opinion." It was easy to see the jealousy caused by the preference shown to Sheridan; and it was reported openly at Brookes's that "they were all at sixes and sevens." There was indeed complete disagreement among the competitors, one great bone of contention being Canning and his party. The coming ministry had heard and persistently refused to take office with Canning. Such was the happy family of the Opposition.*

By this time the two lords had advanced in their work, and made it a stipulation that there were to be no secret advisers,† and that they were to be sole ministers and advisers from that time.

On January 21, they were enabled solemnly to announce to him "that having considered the means of forming a new administration, 'they had concerted with each other such general outlines of the arrangements as they had found most practicable in the present divided state of parties, and under the very embarrassed state of public affairs,' and that they were prepared to enter, whenever required to do so, into the details of these arrangements.

"On the same day they had a long interview with the Prince, of which Lord Grey wrote that 'it was satisfactory in all respects;' and that, though they did not 'get the length of talking of particular arrangements, all the preliminary points were completely agreed upon. Lord Grenville and I,' he adds, 'understand one another so well, that, with respect to our views, everything will go on smoothly; but I foresee other difficulties, particularly a long list from Carlton House, which may produce great embarrassment.'"

With a characteristic want of tact they went about proclaiming what conditions they had imposed on him. But almost at once

* Ward, i. 329. † Ibid. i. 335; Rose, ii. 47.

they found themselves embarrassed by engagements he had been making. He had pledged himself to Erskine for the Chancellorship—to Lord St. Vincent for the Admiralty—to Sheridan for the Irish Secretaryship. Of this they complained loudly. "The Prince," Lord Grey writes (22nd January), "is making an effort for Sheridan to go to Ireland as Secretary. To this it is impossible that we should agree." "I foresee," he repeats, on the 29th January, "so many difficulties with the Prince when we come to more close conference about arrangements, that I cannot see how they are to be got over. Sheridan they still fight for. If it were a mere question of giving him a place, however high, with large emoluments, nobody would be more ready to consent to it than I should be. But I really cannot make up my mind to sending a man with a lighted torch into a magazine of gunpowder. It would be impossible to prevent his communicating with the agitators of Ireland; and in the present disposition of that country, of which we receive daily more alarming accounts, who could look at the possible, or rather the probable, consequences of such communications without horror? If it were not for this, it certainly would be most desirable to get him out of the way; but, with such an apprehension on my mind, how could I hope for sleep or peace?"

For the disastrous failure the Grenvilles were chiefly responsible: as Sheridan told Mr. Creevy: "They were not the operative, but the contributory, cause of the Prince's conduct"—for the restrictions were certainly carried by their votes.

A zealous and active member of the party gives impartial testimony as to the rather summary style in which the Prince was dealt with. The Prince (says Mr. G. Bennett in his interesting MS. diary) objected to particular people, but they were all minor objections: to my mind all ought to have been yielded to him. He made a request for the Mastership of the Ordnance for Lord Hutchinson, which was refused, Lord Roslyn being designed for it; and he objected to Tierney being Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Calcraft going Secretary to Ireland. The principal persons were: Lord Grenville, First Lord of the Treasury; Lord Grey, Foreign Secretary; Ponsonby, Home Secretary; Whitbread, War Secretary; Lord Holland, Admiralty; Lord Lansdowne, Privy Seal; Lord Rosslyn, Ordnance; President of the Council, unknown; Tierney, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Auckland, India Board; Lord Lauderdale, Scotch Privy Seal, the patronage of Scotland. These persons formed the Cabinet. The Seals in Commission, Lord Erskine, Speaker of the House of Lords, not in the Cabinet; Lord Moira, to go to Ireland; Lord Manners, to continue Chancellor; Sir J.

Newport, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Calcraft, Secretary; Lords Carysfort and Ponsonby, Postmasters; Lord Temple, Secretary of War; Mr. Fremantle, to be Paymaster, one abolished. The Boards were composed of bad people. The best —as Lords Milton, Althorp, Tavistock, Messrs. Ward (who was offered the Paymastership) and Lamb (as Under-Secretary)— refused office. Report said Sheridan refused the Treasurership of the Navy, and the Prince demanded it for MacMahon, which, as may well be imagined, was refused.

This was considered as the formation of the new Government, and the old were preparing to quit their places, unexpectedly, at least, to the public. It is difficult indeed to withhold sympathy from this minister, much harassed and baited during his troubled course, so soon to find a bloody termination. From the Regent, as well as from his ministers, he had to endure many humiliations.

This alone would show the difficulties of change. No wonder there was an impression abroad of uncertainty, and that a change after all might not take place. So early as the 17th of January, "the general opinion now seems to be that we are not to go out, the King's recovery being so likely." * And one sagacious Mr. Brand, talking with Mr. Ward, prognosticated that the vigorous stand made by Perceval drew many admirers, that this would give him extraordinary influence, as the head of an Opposition which must give great trouble to the new Government. "Probably," added Mr. Brand, laughing, "the Regent will keep Perceval three months as his father's minister, and then fall so much in love with him, that he will continue him as his own."† But the Prince, still unconscious of what the wiser heads foresaw, and resenting the mortification he was suffering, declared in his coarse way to Lord Grey: "By G— they shall not remain an hour."

It was now January 30th, and though ministers continued to think themselves virtually "out"—some were even packing up and preparing to go to their country houses—there was an element in the situation which had not been duly considered, viz. the improvement in the King's health. This was of a marked kind, and seems to have begun about the 23rd. On the 26th the physicians had thought it desirable that he should see and converse with Mr. Perceval, which he did for the second time on the 29th. His conversation was certainly of a rational kind, and he grasped the awkward and painful character of his political situation, asking as to the particular line taken by every individual, saying he supposed the whole of the Opposition were ranged against him. On being told "Yes," he clapped his hands and said with great emphasis: "I am glad of that!" ‡

* Ward, "Diary," i. 337. † Ibid. 346. ‡ Ibid. i. 371.

On the 31st, Mr. Sheridan coming out of Carlton House and meeting Mr. Ward, gleefully assured him that the new Government was all settled, but it was their own fault that they were going. "If you had not been so anxious about the d——d precedent of 1789 you might have remained in"—that is, if they had not irritated the Prince with their restrictions. However, he added, oddly enough, that he did not know they were going. At White's, bets were made that ministers would remain in; and Lord Temple jocularly asked one of them: "Would they remain till they were killed, or retire gracefully?"

But during these few days a fresh intrigue was going on behind the old one, and the shifty Prince, who had been beguiling the two lords, with the aid of Sheridan and his *camarilla*, was now beguiling his own henchmen in a similar way. The agent in this business was Sir Henry Halford, and there can be little doubt that it was a good deal owing to his adroit management that the Court obtained its victory.* At this time he scarcely knew the Prince, and at the beginning of the illness was well aware, as he told Miss Wynne, that he was surrounded with spies from the Prince, and "that one we well knew and would little suspect" was living at an inn in the town. Finding his position awkward, if not painful, the physician took the course of going to the Prince, telling him everything concerning the state of his patient, adding an undertaking that in future he might depend on always having from him most accurate information, if he would promise not to seek it from any other source. The Prince, he said, was grateful, but he noticed that his surprise at such candour was even more marked. He, however, gave the promise, and, "wonderful to say, kept it." Then Sir Henry went to the Queen, and told her what he had done. "She, with a tremendous frown, expressed great astonishment." Sir Henry stated the obvious reasons for the step he had taken. She paused, her brow cleared. "You are quite right, sir; it is proper that the Prince should be informed." "From that moment," as he says, "confidence and intimacy were renewed between mother and son."† But it had been remarked that the Prince had been taking the opinion of the physicians, ostensibly through Mr. Adam; but was in secret communication with Sir H. Halford; as Sir J. Romilly says, all this time an intrigue was being carried on with great art through the *habile* physician, acting as the agent of the Queen. So early as the 30th of January Lord Grey

* It has been often confidently repeated that Sir Henry Halford was married to one of the Princesses. This, however, does not seem probable, as he was married in 1796, and his wife lived till 1833.

† "Diary of a Lady of Quality," p. 213.

had his forebodings when he learned that the Prince had received a letter from the Queen, saying that Mr. Perceval had seen the King the day before, and had laid before him the whole State business "now pending" in Parliament. She herself had not seen the King, so, as her son remarked, it was evident she had written under his dictation; and he rather acutely pointed out that the word "pending" was a lawyer's word, and was not likely to be used by the Queen.* She also added many compliments on his behaviour, with which the King had been much gratified. Lord Grey calls this a barefaced plot; but he adds: "I believe it will be successful."

On the following day the Chancellor and Lord Liverpool went down to talk with the royal patient, when they found him rather more "hurried;" and it was remarkable that his anxiety and agitation was excited by curiosity as to the behaviour of persons in Parliament. He asked whether the Prince would change the Government, and on being told "Yes," declared that he would bring his present servants back, but desired time.† Now, in favour of the Queen it must be said that this was significant, and betokened relapse; and it is scarcely necessary to presume "a barefaced plot." It was scarcely unnatural, therefore, that she should have written to press the son to stay his hand. She also dwelt on the approaching recovery of the King, and her conviction that a change in the Government would bring on such a paroxysm as she would not answer for the King's life. "The Prince was much affected on reading this letter, and is said to have thrown himself back in his chair, and shed many tears."‡

It was now that he consulted his lady friends, Mrs. Fitzherbert and Lady Hertford, and was assured by them that he ought to retain his ministers. Lord Hertford a few days later told Lord Camden that the Prince intended removing the ministers, in case there was a favourable prospect of his father's recovery, and had actually secured "Lords G. and G." as a reserve. It was noticed that the Duke of York had been with the Prince the whole of the day.§ It was hard to resist such pressure. Accordingly, late on the night of February 1st, Lords Grey and Grenville were waited on by Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Adam, who bore a message from the Prince, that he now decided to make no change. "He cannot bear," he says, "the idea of doing a thing which may have the effect of throwing the King into a new paroxysm, or of being thought to do so"—the words, it will be recollected, used by the Queen. The reflections of the rejected Lord Grey on this mortifying situation are rueful enough:

* Romilly, ii. 361.
† Rose, p. 477.
‡ Grey-Bennett MS.
§ Rose.

"It is, I confess, a great relief to me. I am now exempted from the difficulty and danger of taking any part in the Government, and by no fault of my own. What has passed," he adds, "has given me such an insight into the probable state of things under a new Government, that I much doubt whether any circumstances could ever induce me to take a share in it. The Prince's feelings and his fears have been worked upon so powerfully and so insidiously, particularly by our friend Halford, who has proved himself a most consummate politician (I will not apply a harsher name), that his decision admits of much excuse. His situation was certainly an embarrassing one; and if he had not nerves to overcome his difficulties by facing them at once, he is to be pitied rather than blamed. There can rest upon him no imputation of deceit or treachery; his wishes were to act otherwise; his dislike of the present ministers is unaffected and strong; and everything he has done and said with respect to us has been as kind as possible. After all, he has only relieved us from a situation of great difficulty and danger. I have neither to complain of him nor to reproach myself."

This communication was private, and it is almost comical to find that the rank and file of the party remained for nearly a day longer in this fools' paradise, wrangling over places and adjusting contending claims. Lord Moira on the following morning told Mr. Coutts's brother that he was going as Lord-Lieutenant to Ireland, and the Secretary and other officials were bidden to hold themselves in readiness to start!

But there were rumours in the air. At the Duchess of Gordon's the same evening, where there was a large party assembled, the news of disaster could be read in the angry and disappointed faces of "the wives of Opposition."

On February 4th Mr. Perceval received the following letter, which, it should be noted, was written by Sheridan, the present adviser, secretary, etc., of the Prince:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. PERCEVAL.

"Carlton House, February 4th, 1811.

"The Prince of Wales considers the moment to be arrived which calls for his decision with respect to the persons to be employed by him in the administration of the Executive Government of the country, according to the powers vested in him by the Bill passed by the two Houses of Parliament, and now on the point of receiving the sanction of the Great Seal.

"The Prince feels it incumbent upon him at this precise juncture to communicate to Mr. Perceval his intention not to remove

from their situations those whom he finds there as his Majesty's official servants. At the same time the Prince owes it to the truth and sincerity of character which, he trusts, will appear in every action of his life, in whatever situation he may be placed, explicitly to declare that the irresistible impulse of filial duty and affection to his beloved and afflicted father leads him to dread that any act of the Regent might, in the smallest degree, have the effect of interfering with the progress of his sovereign's recovery.

"This consideration alone dictates the decision now communicated to Mr. Perceval.

"Having thus performed an act of indispensable duty, from a just sense of what is due to his own consistency and honour, the Prince has only to add that, among the many blessings to be derived from his majesty's restoration to health and to the personal exercise of his royal functions, it will not, in the Prince's estimation, be the least, that most fortunate event will at once rescue him from a situation of unexampled embarrassment, and put an end to a state of affairs ill calculated, he fears, to sustain the interests of the United Kingdom in this awful and perilous crisis, and most difficult to be reconciled to the general principles of the British Constitution."

This was acknowledged the following day by the minister in complimentary terms, admitting the reason so pointedly given by the Prince for this step, and offering handsome excuses for the restrictions put upon him.

As a comment on these transactions let us listen to the bitter complaints of the neglected Sir P. Francis, addressed to Lady Downshire, about this time: "And you believe he is honest, and, moreover, has a heart of English mould, expansive enough to contain, and stout enough to retain, those principles that I have been trying to implant in his heart long before you were born, and very soon after he was. . . . Your wishes deceive you, as mine have done me. You have often witnessed the apparent docility and conviction with which he listened when I laid before him at his own seeking the principles that English monarchs should bring to the throne or—they may learn them somewhere else. He was out of conceit with the ministry of that day, as he is now with this; they had spited him, and he relished a doctrine which contemned them: he is in the same predicament now. Our friend will first forget our principles, and then our persons, and the sooner for having contracted debts to us, not only of honour, but promise to pay. Have I not attended his call whenever he was in any extra difficulty, and wished to astonish his usual counsellors by

his wisdom? Have I not left my bed early, and late taken rest, and waited on him long after the *mezzu notte?* And has not my pen, my experience, knowledge, and judgment, such as they are, been at his service, and when did I ever claim my own if it could gain him credit? Your ladyship and MacMahon only knew of the letters at the time, or that I have many other claims on him; but so much the worse. Is it past doubt that he hates C. and raves at P.? . . . Yet it is something that he still seeks you, and has not yet given me up, which I am sure he will do when he deserts those principles which he knows are dear to me. I have his command to visit him this autumn, and shall then find out whether the change that E(rskine?) and I talked of has really taken place. I expect there will be one ere long in his situation, but not, I trust, in his political views, till power and flattery have their usual effect on him. No thanks to E(rskine?) and S(heridan?) if he be not as all his fathers were. But do not mind a word they say. M(oira?) is not much better. Trust S. as you would a jack-a-lanthorn, E. as a quicksand, and M. a mirage in the desert. These three friends have been his worst enemies. They have counteracted all the good I might have done."

Here closes the long and important era of some thirty years, during which the Prince had run his strange erratic purposeless course of riot and pleasure. He was now virtually on the throne: his reign had begun. Unhappily the twenty years of rule that were to follow were to offer no improvement.

BOOK II.

REGENT.—1811–1820.

CHAPTER I.

1811.

On the 5th of February, the day appointed for swearing in the new Regent, a curious scene was witnessed at Carlton House. It was attended with some state—the band of the Grenadier Guards (the performers having "white gaiters" on) playing in the courtyard, the yeomen of the old King's Body Guard lining the staír, in attendance on their new master. All the Dukes were there, and nearly all the Privy Councillors in town, about a hundred in number. Lord Camden was sent to the Prince's room, and a long delay succeeded, during which we are informed the company "were highly gratified with seeing the Princess Charlotte on horseback, accompanied by two grooms, make the tour of the beautiful gardens in the rear of the palace."* At last the Prince arrived in grand procession, preceded by the officers of his household—Lords Moira, Keith, Cassilis, Hutchinson, Messrs. Sheridan, Michael Angelo, Taylor, Tyrwhitt, MacMahon, Bloomfield, Hulse, etc. Mr. Adam was unaccountably absent, by accident it was believed, though the Prince's eagerness to see him was noted. The reason for this absence, it will be seen, was characteristic and a substantial one: "He kept the Council waiting two full hours—the King never detained anyone a minute—while he was looking after Adam to make him a Privy Councillor, who shrank away declining the honour, as he would have been obliged to have given up many of his agencies and would have lost to the amount of £2000 per annum."†

* Huish, ii. 32. † Bennett MS.

Thus there appears to be always something almost singular in these public manifestations of the "first gentleman"—the spectacle of the eager Prince's anxiety seeking his subordinate to the delay of the important proceedings, and the anxiety of the latter to keep out of the way, must have been ludicrous enough. Then the proceedings commenced, the Prince seating himself at the top of the table.

Nor must a fitting incident of the scene be omitted. The Prince, among other documents, handed to the President "a certificate of his having received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at the Chapel Royal, on Sunday, the 27th of January, which was also countersigned and deposited with the other documents in a box."* Then he also subscribed the declaration mentioned in an Act made in the thirtieth year of King Charles II., entitled "An Act for the more Effectual Preserving the King's Person and Government by Disabling Papists from Sitting in Either House of Parliament," and which declaration his royal highness audibly made, repeated, and subscribed. The Lord President signed first, and every one of the Privy Councillors in succession signed these instruments as witnesses—and the same was delivered into the hand of the Keeper of the Records.

But during this ceremonial there were some significant tokens which showed what were the real feelings of the principal personage. The ministers must have been confounded to see ostentatiously displayed at the head of the room the busts of Mr. Fox and the Duke of Bedford, which they learned had been introduced only an hour or two before by the Regent's order.† The situation of the ministers, too, was awkward. Upon some one wishing Lord Harrowby joy, he replied: "Joy! how can I feel it? We have to do business with a man who hates us, and only wishes to turn us out." He was very civil and friendly to some of those that kissed hands, and very rude to others,

* "The Lord President then approached the Regent, bent the knee and had the honour to kiss his hand. The royal Dukes followed, and afterwards the Archbishop of Canterbury, and all the rest according to the order in which they sat at the long table, advancing to the chair on both sides. During the whole of this ceremony his Royal Highness maintained the most dignified and graceful deportment; and it was remarked that there was not the slightest indication of partiality of behaviour to one set of men more than to another.

"The ceremony being closed a short levee took place in the drawing-room, where his Royal Highness addressed himself to the circle; and afterwards he gave an audience to Mr. Perceval, who had the honour of again kissing his hand as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer."

† Bennett MS. His brother, Lord Ossulston, was present.

particularly to the Speaker and to Mr. Perceval, turning his head away while they kissed his hand.*

However idle all this may appear—and certainly the introduction of the busts was as boyish a mode of protest as could be conceived—it illustrated more clearly than anything that has gone before that his late political step was a matter of humour and prejudice rather than of principle; and that the ruling motives had been dislike to individuals, and a wish to avoid trouble and annoyance.

But in his conversation with the Prime Minister the Prince had also taken care to show his humour. After offering some business-like suggestions as to the Parliament, he adverted to all that had passed, saying that "it was impossible for him to alter the opinions he had entertained for so many years; but that now it was done and over." He also insisted that the speech to be made for him should not be made to utter any sentiments that he was known not to entertain. Neither would he deliver it, as he did not wish to go down to the House and exhibit himself as a pageant during the illness of the King.†

In pursuance of the same policy he showed his distaste to his ministers by communicating with them through his henchmen, MacMahon, Tyrwhitt, etc., an affront which they resented, and were determined not to submit to. They made serious representations, and he had of course to give way, in a dignified and distant manner.

When he did see the speech made for him he declared that it could not be better. On some high-handed proceedings of the Irish Government he entered seriously into discussion, but subsequently approved the Government's proceeding. When Mr. Perceval suggested an additional allowance, the Prince rather ostentatiously declined to add to the burdens of the nation.

Meanwhile the King was not mending; though the regular bulletins were issued announcing that he continued to go on very well. It was stated, indeed, that he himself had fixed May as the date when he would resume office; but it is evident from a letter of the Queen's to Lord Eldon that his condition was not promising.‡

It was natural in the case of one so afflicted that an excessive jealousy of his son should appear, the ministers indiscreetly praising to him the good conduct of the Prince, his capacity, moderation and ability, as well as his filial affection. This was

* The Speaker in his diary reports the scene in terms that show he was offended. "The Regent repeated, or appeared to repeat, the oath."—Lord Colchester, "Diary," ii. 318.

† Colchester, "Diary."

‡ "Life of Lord Eldon," ii. 165.

duly repeated by the Queen; but it presently inflamed the King into a demand for the instant resumption of his authority, "on which head he became quite furious and unmanageable."*

The levee which had been postponed owing to the Regent's lameness, a horse having trodden upon him, was now held. The scene, however, was splendid, and very numerously attended by men of all parties. He put on a most gracious appearance, all who had not been presented kissing hands. Indeed, Sheridan had industriously sent it about that members of all parties were expected to call at Carlton House. The magnificence of the spacious and sumptuously decorated rooms struck everyone, and strangers and foreign ministers declared that they exceeded Versailles. Count Münster thought that it excelled the palace at St. Petersburg in its decoration. It was, however, noticed that at a ball given by Mrs. Montague on February 20th, he looked worn and dejected, so that some wit declared that "they ought to make the King Sub-Regent." At the end of April he appeared at the Royal Academy dinner, where he gave a long speech on the advance the arts had made, and was complimented in almost fulsome terms by the venerable President West.

But he had now determined to exhibit such a gala to the country as would make his name celebrated. The Carlton House fête of June 19th, on which nothing that could contribute to the display of magnificence or state was spared, is even now recalled; there are some alive who were present. His whole energies were given to the preparations for this entertainment. The object given out was to promote the use of national manufactures. It was originally fixed for the 5th of June, but as the day drew near the King's condition became worse, and decency required that it should be put off, if not given up altogether; but an expense of £10,000 had been already incurred. The frivolous world was all agog with the subject, and there was a sort of furore to obtain invitations. It was at first intended to ask no lady under the rank of a peer's daughter; but this distinction gave offence. "There must be," writes Mr. F. Jackson, who supplies a lively account of them, "manœuvres to secure tickets, cutting and jostling among the fine ladies to be in at the fête. I know that the Prince said he would invite fifteen hundred persons. There used to be at Buckingham House no one under the rank of earl's sons and daughters."†

"Those who are invited," he goes on to say, "and still more those who are not, are making an outrageous fuss. Husbands

* "Buckingham Papers—The Regency," i. 58. The account is given by the anonymous and sagacious correspondent of Lord Temple.

† "Diaries."

invited without their wives; mothers without their daughters; in some instances, daughters who are not out; in others, people who are dead and buried." In the midst of this hum of preparation a rumour got abroad that the King was dead, believed to be a ruse of the shopkeepers, who succeeded in selling all their crape. Again there was a postponement. It was at last fixed for the 19th. As the day drew near "the hopes and fears of the *beau monde* rose and fell with the bulletins." A *mot* was circulated to the effect that the old phrase, "fixed as *Fête*," must be now quite exploded, as there was nothing so uncertain. But at last the exciting evening came round, and the show began, and before eight o'clock the streets were crowded with company. One of the guests shall describe the scene:

"The fête, then, as a whole, was the handsomest thing I have ever seen in this country, or, of its kind, in any other. There was greater brilliancy and richness of dress amongst the women, though not so much taste as elsewhere. The supper surpassed anything I ever saw or ever heard of at other Courts. At eight o'clock there was a string of carriages that reached to the top of St. James's Street, and by nine to the top of Bond Street. I went out for a walk amongst the crowd at the latter hour. The jostling and pushing to get a sight of the women, especially when accompanied by a star or a riband, was something extraordinary; and the remarks of the people on the occupants of the carriages, as the latter crawled or jolted on at a snail's pace, were sometimes very droll and apt, though not always complimentary.

"To the royal family of France every refinement of attention was shown. The Prince wrote to Louis XVIII. with his own hand, and sent the letter of invitation by a general officer. The letter was addressed '*A Monsieur le Comte de Lisle*;' but *Sire* and *Votre Majesté* were used in the letter itself. Louis slept at Monsieur's house in South Audley Street. Going to and returning from Carlton House, he was escorted by an officer's detachment of hussars. The party consisted of the King, Monsieur, the Duc and Duchesse d'Angoulême, the Prince de Condé, Duc de Bourbon, and Duc de Berri. The Prince, who wore a very rich scarlet uniform, of not very good taste or very well made, but with a most magnificent star, badge, aigrette, and sabre, received them in an apartment fitted up for the occasion with rich blue silk, *parsemé* with fleurs-de-lis in gold.

"The King, for a time, declined sitting, saying he was only Comte de Lisle. The Prince, placing a chair for him, replied: '*Ici votre Majesté est Roi de France.*' Amongst the pictures that ornamented the reception-room was a Rembrandt, for which a few days before the Prince gave five thousand guineas.

"The Duchesse d'Angoulême looked interesting, and something like the best portraits of her mother, therefore, not very pretty; but she was evidently embarrassed, and her dress and demeanour were those of a person who had not been much in the world. In fact, she may be said to have stepped from a prison —and what a prison!—to Carlton House; for she was never before in a company of a hundred persons. I know, from a perfectly trustworthy source, that for some time she was in agony at the idea of going to this fête, and that it was only at the most pressing entreaties of her family that she consented. Both she and the Duke, who is a mean-looking little man, are of a very retiring disposition, and devote almost the whole of their time to works of piety and charity. The Duchess of York sat with her a good deal, and looked very well; her '*sposo fido*' as easy in his manners and as much like a gentleman as usual. Amidst the blaze of diamonds, those of the Queen were wanting; though all there—*en masse*—are said to have exceeded in value anything ever before assembled. As the Queen did not come to the fête, of course the Princesses were absent, and by the conversation of everybody from Windsor, it was easy to collect that there people thought the fête ill-timed."

"The Grecian hall," says another account, "was adorned with shrubs, and an additional number of large lanterns and patent lamps. The floor was carpeted; and two lines, composed of Yeomen of the Guard, the King's, the Regent's, the Queen's, and Royal Dukes' servants, in their grandest liveries, formed an avenue to the octagonal hall, where yeomen were also stationed, and which was decorated with antique draperies of scarlet trimmed with gold-colour, and tied up by gold-coloured cords and tassels. In the hall were also assembled, to receive the company, Generals Keppell and Turner, Colonels Bloomfield, Thomas, and Tyrwhitt, together with Lords Moira, Dundas, Keith, Heathfield, and Mount-Edgecumbe. The Prince entered the state-rooms at a quarter past nine arrayed in a field-marshal's uniform; just after the Prince came in, the royal family of France arrived. During the evening the Prince Regent passed from room to room, devoid of all ceremony, conversing with the utmost cheerfulness with his guests. The general amusement of the company for some time was perambulating the halls and apartments on the principal floor. The grand circular dining-room excited particular admiration by its cupola, supported by columns of porphyry, and the superior elegance of the whole of its arrangements. The room in which the throne stood was hung with crimson velvet, with gold lace and fringes. The canopy of the throne was surmounted by golden helmets with lofty plumes of ostrich feathers,

and underneath stood the state chair. Crimson and gold stools were placed round the room, which contained pictures of the King, Queen, Prince Regent, and Duke of York. The ball-room floors were chalked in beautiful arabesque devices. In the centre of the largest were the initials G. III. R. It was divided for two sets of dancers by a crimson silk-cord; but owing to the great number of persons, and the excessive heat of the weather, no dancing took place in this room, nor were the dancers numerous in the ball-room. The first dance was led off by Earl Percy and Lady F. Montague."

The Queen his mother, and his sisters the Princesses, viewed the affair as unbecoming, if not indecent, with the unfortunate King distraught, if not dying. This did not much affect the host, though he would have been glad of her presence for the display of the matchless crown diamonds amid the general blaze of jewels. However, he was attended by the Dukes, his brethren —that worthy cohort who did not fail him except when their jealousies interposed.* The next person excluded was the Princess, who made a jest on the matter, declaring she was like an archbishop's wife, who does not partake in her husband's honours.† She even allowed her suite to go, and furnished them with new dresses, saying: "That they should certainly obey the Regent's commands." His only daughter—now a maid of blushing fifteen, who might have been allowed to look on from "the pen" at the show, if not to take part in it—was also tabooed. An artless letter, written to her "dear Miss Hayman," shows how this exclusion was felt:

"My dear Hamy,

"But a few lines, as I will write you a longer one soon again, only to tell you that the Prince Regent gives a magnificent ball on the 5th of June. I have not been invited, nor do I know if I shall be or not. If I should not, it will make a great noise in the world, as the friends I have seen have repeated over and over again it is my duty to go there; it is proper that I should. Really I do think it will be very hard if I am not asked."

But there was a fourth lady whom his treatment on this festival occasion kept away. The theatrical chivalry that made him welcome the royal exiles, did not extend to those with real domestic claims upon him. "Upon all former occasions," Mrs. Fitzherbert told Lord Stourton, "to avoid etiquette in circum-

* It is evident that all Windsor is highly displeased on the occasion.—Jackson, "Diaries," i. 267. † Ibid. i. 273.

stances of such delicacy as regarded her own situation with reference to the Prince, it had been customary to sit at table without regard to rank. Upon the present occasion this plan was to be altered, and she was informed through her friends at court that at the royal table the individuals invited were to sit according to their rank. When assured of this novel arrangement, she asked the Prince, who had invited her with the rest of his company, where she was to sit. He said: 'You know, madam, you have no place.' 'None, sir,' she replied, 'but such as you choose to give me.' Upon this she informed the royal family that she would not go. The Duke of York and others endeavoured to alter the preconcerted arrangement, but the Prince was inflexible."* Thus terminated this fatal ill-starred connection.

That this was done on purpose there can be no doubt. The meaning of this was the present ascendency of Manchester House, of Lady Hertford, and her son Lord Yarmouth. It actually led to what the Regent was no doubt wishing for, a final breach. It will be seen that he had now begun to think of a divorce from the Princess, and the intimacy with Mrs. Fitzherbert might be inconvenient. Meanwhile the guests noted her absence, and lightly repeated that "the two wives were sitting at home."

It was characteristic that the object of this Prince's enmity should be so often women, while those that controlled and "led" him were women also.

But to return to the fête. The hour of supper had arrived, when the Prince led the French King and royal family to the table. The supper was announced at two, when the company descended by the great staircase to the apartments below and the temporary buildings on the lawn. The room at the bottom of the staircase represented a bower, with a grotto lined with a profusion of shrubs and flowers. The grand table extended the

* "They no longer hesitated to agree with her that no advantage was to be obtained by further postponement of her own anxious desire to close her connection with the Prince, and to retire once more into private life. She told me she often looked back with wonder that she had not sunk under the trials of those two years. Having come to this resolution, she was obliged, on the very evening, or on that which followed the royal dinner, to attend an assembly at Devonshire House, which was the last evening she saw the Prince previously to their final separation. The Duchess of Devonshire, taking her by the arm, said to her: 'You must come and see the Duke in his own room, as he is suffering from a fit of the gout; but he will be glad to see an old friend.' In passing through the rooms, she saw the Prince and Lady Hertford in a tête-à-tête conversation, and nearly fainted under all the impressions which then rushed upon her mind; but, taking a glass of water, she recovered and passed on."

whole length of the conservatory, and across Carlton House, to the length of two hundred feet. Along the centre of the table, about six inches above the surface, a canal of pure water continued flowing from a silver fountain beautifully constructed at the head of the table. Its banks were covered with green moss and aquatic flowers; gold and silver fish swam and sported through the bubbling current, which produced a pleasing murmur where it fell and formed a cascade at the outlet. At the head of the table, above the fountain, sat his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, on a plain mahogany chair with a leather back. The most particular friends of the Prince were arranged on each side. They were attended by sixty servitors; seven waited on the Prince, besides six of the King's and six of the Queen's footmen, in their state liveries, with one man in a complete suit of ancient armour. At the back of the Prince's seat appeared aureola tables covered with crimson drapery, constructed to exhibit with the greatest effect, a profusion of the most exquisitely-wrought silver-gilt plate, consisting of fountains, tripods, épergnes, dishes, and other ornaments. Above the whole of this superb display appeared a royal crown and his Majesty's cipher, G. R., splendidly illumined. Behind the Prince's chair was most skilfully disposed a sideboard, covered with gold vases, urns, massy salvers, etc.; the whole surmounted by a Spanish urn, taken from on board the "Invincible Armada." Adjoining to this were other tables running through the library and whole lower suite of rooms, the candelabras in which were so arranged that the Regent could distinctly see and be seen, from one end to the other. The Regent's table accommodated one hundred and twenty-two, including the royal Dukes, the Bourbons, and principal nobility. On the right hand of the Regent was the Duchess of Angoulême; on the left the Duchess of York, the Princess Sophia of Gloucester, etc. From the library and room beyond branched out two great lines of tables under canvas, far into the gardens, each in the shape of a cross, all richly served with silver plate, and covered with the delicacies of the season. When the whole company was seated, there was a line of female beauty more richly adorned, and a blaze of jewellery more brilliant, than England ever probably displayed before. Four handsome marquees were pitched on the lawn of Carlton House, with chevaux-de-frise, to prevent all intrusion; bands of music were stationed in the tents; and when dancing commenced, the gay throng moved through thickets of roses, geraniums, and other fragrant sweets, illumined by variegated lights that gleamed like stars through the foliage. The upper servants wore a cos-

tume of dark blue, trimmed with broad gold lace; the others wore state liveries. The assistants out of livery were dressed uniformly in black suits with white vests.

"It is said," adds Mr. Jackson, "that near two thousand persons supped; but the extraordinary part of it was, that so large a number should have been served in such a style; tureens, dishes, plates, even soup-plates, were everywhere of silver, with as many changes of everything as were wanted. There were hot soups and roasts; all besides cold, but of excellent and fresh cookery. Peaches, grapes, pine-apples, and every other minor fruit in and out of season were in profusion. Iced champagne at every three or four persons, all the other wines also excellent. There was no crowding, hurry, or bustle in waiting; everything was done as in a private house.

"The ropes that, in various directions, supported the tent were all gilded, and were ornamented with wreaths and festoons of flowers without end. The lustres were large and very handsome, and of the finest glass, and were so numerous that every part of the tent was not only well but brilliantly lighted.

"After supper the general company walked round those parts of the tent where they had not supped, and to the apartments *de plein pied,* which are the Prince's private rooms, but formed on this occasion ante-rooms to the tent, where also tables were laid. In this way we were led on to the conservatory, where the Prince's party supped, consisting of all the royalties, dukes, and marquises, with their wives, and as many earls and countesses as could be stowed in.

"The conservatory was really like what one would imagine a fairy-hall to be. It is a building of the lightest Gothic, resembling the choir of a cathedral. Its defects, if it has any, were concealed, and its beauties revealed by innumerable small coloured lamps placed all round the little cornices, and in the niches of the Gothic work. In the centre were lustres of the finest and most brilliant glass that can be made. The table was served with gold and silver-gilt; the Prince's own state service, and which I had before seen at the silversmith's. Where china and glass were used, they were of the most magnificent kind, and at the top of the room was a sort of buffet, on which each piece of the massive sideboard *vermeille* was separately placed.

"The Serpentine river you hear so much of was on the plateau, a paltry thing of bad taste, but which amused the *badauds,* especially as it was full of real fish—roach, dace, and gudgeons—the dying and the dead. Day broke while we were at supper."

This river excited general ridicule, Mr. Tierney likening it to

a Sadler's Wells display; but like the Pavilion and the Pagodas in the park (later, his uniforms) his so-called "taste" was of the gew-gaw order. "However," says one of the guests (Lord Colchester), "it was oriental and fanciful towards the Prince's end, particularly as in that part the table widened, and the water also fell by a succession of cascades into a circular lake, surrounded with architectural decorations and small vases burning perfumes."*

"Nothing was ever half so magnificent as this supper scene," wrote home Thomas Moore, now at every entertainment in London, and who had obtained the Prince's patronage, for a time at least, and was dazzled with the spectacle. He writes some time after that it was reported that Waithman, "the patriotic linendraper," had got a card, and every odd-looking fellow that appeared, people said: "That's Mr. Waithman."

An amusing incident was Sheridan's hoaxing invitation of the half-cracked "Romeo" Coates, to whom a well-imitated card had been sent. The poor coxcomb arrived in his finest fantastic dress, —the hoaxer watching him near the entrance—but was repulsed by the officials, who detected the imposture. The Regent learned the trick that had been played, and with gracious good feeling sent excuses to the victim, with a kind and earnest invitation to come and inspect the adornments of the entertainment.

This occasion prompted the lively muse of the poet:

Come to our fête, and bring with thee
Thy newest, best embroidery!
Come to our fête, and show again
That pea-green coat, thou pink of men!
Which charm'd all eyes, that last survey'd it;
When B——l's self inquired "who made it?"—
When cits came wondering, from the East,
And thought thee Poet Pye *at least!*

Oh! come—(if haply 'tis thy week
For looking pale)—with paly cheek;
Though more we love thy roseate days,
When the rich rouge-pot pours its blaze

* "Before the company rose a ridiculous scene took place, for there was a grand crowd from the supper-room (beyond the brass railing) of fine ladies, who came to lean and look over the railing at our superior lot, and to endeavour at descrying the gudgeons in our river. 'There, I see them!' 'Look, look!' 'Don't you see?' by all the misses and company, old and young, not to mention Lady Mansfield, Lady Buckingham and niece, old Mr. Hastings, and many other souls, whose eager and ridiculous curiosity was very entertaining."—"Diary of Lord Colchester," ii. 338. It is impossible not to contrast the pleasant vivacity and even humour of the letter and diary writers of this time with the inert style of more modern days. Everyone seemed to write with the *gaieté du cœur* that was found in the comedies of the time.

Full o'er thy face, and, amply spread,
Tips e'en thy whisker-tops with red—
Like the last tints of dying day
That o'er some darkling grove delay!

Bring thy best lace, thou gay Philander!
(That lace, like H—rry Al—x—nd—r,
Too precious to be wash'd!)—thy rings,
Thy seals—in short, thy prettiest things!
Put all thy wardrobe's glories on,
And yield, in frogs and fringe, to none
But the great R—g—t's self alone!

Who—by particular desire—
For that night only, means to hire
A dress from Romeo C—tes, Esquire—
Something between ('twere sin to hack it)
The Romeo robe and Hobby jacket!
Hail, first of actors! best of R—g—ts!
Born for each other's fond allegiance!
Both gay Lotharios—*both* good dressers—
Of Serious Farce *both* learn'd Professors—
Both circled round, for use or show,
With cocks'-combs, wheresoe'er they go!

Thou know'st the time, thou man of lore!
It takes to chalk a ball-room floor—
Thou know'st the time, too, well-a-day!
It takes to dance that chalk away.
The ball-room opens—far and nigh
Comets and suns beneath us lie;
O'er snowy moons and stars we walk,
And the floor seems a sky of chalk!
But soon shall fade the bright deceit,
When many a maid, with busy feet
That sparkle in the lustre's ray,
O'er the white path shall bound and play
Like nymphs along the Milky Way!—
At every step a star is fled,
And suns grow dim beneath their tread!
So passeth life—(thus Sc—tt would write,
And spinsters read him with delight)—
Hours are not feet, yet hours trip on,
Time is not chalk, yet time's soon gone!

But, hang this long digressive flight!
I meant to say, thou'lt see, that night,
What falsehood rankles in their hearts,
Who say the P——e neglects the arts—
Neglects the arts!—no St——g! no:
Thy Cupids answer "'tis not so:"
And every floor, that night, shall tell
How quick thou daubest, and how well!
Shine as thou may'st in French vermilion,
Thou'rt *best*—beneath a French cotillion;

And still com'st off, whate'er thy faults,
With *flying colours* in a waltz!
Nor needst thou mourn the transient date
To thy best works assigned by fate—
While *some chefs-d'œuvre* live to weary one,
Thine boast a short life and a merry one;
Their hour of glory past and gone
With "Molly put the kettle on!"

But, bless my soul! I've scarce a leaf
Of paper left—so, must be brief.

This festive fête, in fact, will be
The former fête's facsimile;
The same long masquerade of rooms,
Trick'd in such different quaint costumes
(These, P—rt—r, are thy glorious works!),
You'd swear Egyptians, Moors, and Turks,
Bearing good taste some deadly malice
Had clubb'd to raise a picnic palace;
And each, to make the oglio pleasant,
Had sent a state-room as a present!—
The same fauteuils and girandoles—
The same gold asses,* pretty souls!

That, in this rich and classic dome,
Appear so perfectly at home!
The same bright river 'mongst the dishes,
But *not*—ah! not the same dear fishes—
Late hours and claret kill'd the old ones!—
So, 'stead of silver and of gold ones
(It being rather hard to raise
Fish of that *specie* nowadays),
Some Sprats have been, by Y—rm—th's wish,
Promoted into *Silver* Fish,
And Gudgeons (so V—ns—tt—t told
The R—g—t) are as good as *Gold!*

So, prythee, come—our fête will be
But half a fête, if wanting thee!

The public were admitted on the following days to see the decorations, which was lauded as an instance of "the Prince's feeling and good-nature." Much of this must be credited to a natural wish that all should see and admire his state. The crush was tremendous on this occasion, and the excitement exceeded that of the festival itself. Some thirty thousand people assembled outside, filling up Pall Mall and the Haymarket. All were so packed, the fine ladies and the mob, that the situation became

* "The salt-cellars on the P——e's own table were in the form of an ass with panniers."

alarming; many fainted; shrieks and cries were heard. Lord Yarmouth came forward and made a speech. When the gates were opened a rush was made—the ladies thrown down and trampled on—an elderly lady had her leg broken, while those of the fair sex who were rescued could not leave Carlton House, their clothes being torn from their backs. The Duke of Clarence then came forward, and in a speech tranquillised the crowd. But great mischief had been done, and many disasters occurred.

Such was the great Carlton House Fête.

CHAPTER II.

1811.

While all this revelry had been going on the King was growing worse; the bulletins indeed told the public that he "remains in the same state as during last week," or that his Majesty is "no worse." On review of the whole, there can be no doubt that his condition often could be fitly described as that of insanity, with occasional lucid intervals, rather than, as his family and the ministers tried to represent it, that of sanity with relapses into that malady. Yet the persons most interested in his recovery—the Queen and Mr. Perceval—in their eagerness were forcing him into premature exercise of his faculties, experiments which could only be injurious. Thus they had tried him "by proposing to him to hear the Catholic debate read, to which he said he had no objection, that he knew he must practise self-command." This was one of the topics that had actually produced his insanity. But Mr. Perceval gave out that he was now well enough to be restored, but that by business he might relapse.

While these intrigues were proceeding, the Prince's political principles were to be almost at once put to a very awkward test. It was not unnatural that the Catholics, finding that the "friend and follower of Fox" was now ruling the kingdom, might reasonably expect that his principles would at least find sympathy. They were now "agitating," and the Irish Government had been compelled to forbid an election of delegates for "an unlawful assembly," called the Catholic Committee; which, with other repressive proceedings, excited discontent and symptoms of rebellion. These measures were duly sanctioned by the Regent, somewhat to the surprise of the public and indignation of those

who were affected by it. Lord Grenville, moodily looking on from Dropmore, wrote an explanation to his friends.

LORD GRENVILLE TO LORD AUCKLAND.

"Dropmore, August 18th, 1811.

"My dear Lord,

"I believe the fact about the Irish business to be, that the Prince Regent sanctioned the proclamation* on the ground of having agreed to let the ministers go on their own way, and reserving to himself his own more tolerant principles and opinions. For myself (and my friends, too, for I should be ashamed to indulge a feeling merely personal on such subjects, but for all of us), I am persuaded that we have great reason to rejoice in an additional obstacle to our being called upon once more to undertake to serve the Crown, without possessing its confidence, and to act honourably on our side towards those who are hourly betraying us."

But in truth the behaviour of the Prince all through this year of restrictions was a series of fluctuations. Now friendly to the minister, now turning on him; now with the King, now going against him; now with the people, now against them. Thus he had received a deputation from the Lord Mayor and Common Council, in presence of the ministers of state, when it was urged that "the present representation of the Commons House of Parliament, which was termed a ready instrument in the hands of the minister for the time being, whether for purposes of nullifying the just prerogatives of the Crown, or of insulting and oppressing the people, and a reform in which representation is therefore absolutely necessary, for the safety of the Crown, the happiness of the people, and the peace and independence of the country." To which he returned a dignified answer, assuring the City that he should esteem it the happiest moment of his life, when he could resign the powers delegated to him into the hands of his sovereign; and that he should always listen to the complaints of those who thought themselves aggrieved.

Again, when a Radical address at a meeting held at Westminster, and presided over by the well-known Major Cartwright,

* "The question of Ireland is parried judiciously enough for a short time; but come it must, and I know, as I dare say you do equally, that the Prince is pledged as strongly as man can be (even of a very late date) to support the Catholics."—Mr. Fremantle to Duke of Buckingham, "Buckingham Papers—Regency," i. 134.

was presented to him, pointing out the dangers of delaying reform, it was printed in the official Gazette, a most unusual circumstance, and considered to be owing to the positive command of the Prince himself.*

On a contest for the Chancellorship of Cambridge, he gave all his support to his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, as against the Duke of Rutland, who had received the promise of the King's support, as well as the Prime Minister's. This the candidate published in a letter, adding, with great candour, that "he had no merit but the good-will of these personages."

Then, by another turn, when the Gold Coin Bill came on in July, "the Prince's friends" abandoned the Opposition and voted steadily with the Government, Sheridan speaking against Tierney. "Except on the Regency they have never attended so zealously. . . . In short the whole Carlton House interest has been most actively exerted," wrote Mr. Brougham, "with what views I think it not very difficult to guess."† It might fairly be surmised that he reckoned on aid from the ministers in two plans that were now in his thoughts, viz. the hope of getting rid of the Princess of Wales by a divorce, as well as of having his debts paid once more and receiving a handsome allowance. As to the first of these plans, he might think it feasible now that her only friend and protector was disabled, and that the excellent Perceval, so lately her champion, had "thrown her over."‡

It is not remarkable, therefore, that now he should make approaches to the minister, and, to the astonishment and disgust of the Liberals, had actually promised to dine with him. But the King's state became so serious that at half-past nine on the 19th a message was despatched to Mr. Perceval from the Regent, excusing himself from dining with him on the morrow, but strangely adding that "when this was over, whether the event was favourable or unfavourable, his royal highness would consider the engagement to dine with him as still holding."§ Such was his singular character. Yet only a month before there had been "a serious misunderstanding between them, which had risen to such a height that one or other must give way."‖

During the recess the Regent paid a visit to Brighton, and

* Huish, ii. 41. † "Autobiography," i. 524.

‡ "It appears," wrote this usually well-informed person, in August "that he is bent upon a divorce, and will make any man minister who will assist him. I have heard he intends bringing the Princess to trial as soon as his father and her mother are gone, and that then, though her life, as she knows, would be forfeited, he should only confine her in Holyrood House for ever."—Jackson, "Diary," i. 275.

§ Colchester, ii. 342. ‖ "Buckingham Papers—Regency," i. 83.

enjoyed himself very much, casting off business. Mr. Jackson, who was there at the time, furnishes a glimpse of the life at the Pavilion.

"The Regent, in fact, has been very gracious, and we have been invited to all his evening receptions. On Sunday, just as he seemed ready to dismiss the party, he kept them waiting a full half-hour whilst he was in very animated and familiar conversation with my brother and Elizabeth.

"He is now returned to London, highly pleased with his stay here, and regretting especially that he must go just as the weather is becoming fine, for it has rained hard part of every day he has been here. He had the Duke of Cumberland with him, Lord Yarmouth, and two or three gentlemen of his family, with only a small retinue of servants.

"The evening's entertainment consists in hearing the Regent's private band play. The band is a part of his establishment confined to this place. It is composed only of wind instruments. We heard some of the finest music, executed in the very finest manner; all the performers being musicians of the very first talent. On one or two evenings, Miss Chinnery, who possesses great musical ability in addition to her many other accomplishments, was asked to play on the pianoforte. This was considered a very great compliment, and, as you will readily understand, was the cause of much envy and backbiting amongst the women. Many soft sleepy eyes opened, many arched brows were raised higher, and amongst the dowagers many significant glances were slyly exchanged. But Miss Chinnery performed splendidly, and without any of the airs and graces with which I have seen some girls prattle with the keys. She was complimented greatly, and particularly so by the Regent. On one occasion we heard Viotti, the celebrated performer on the violin. About twelve o'clock, sandwiches and some light refreshments are brought in, and the Prince retires; having made the tour of the room to speak to the company, both before and after the performance of the band. I think the company never exceeded a hundred, and sometimes not more than thirty persons were present."

These Pavilion concerts showed not only his taste for music, but his good-nature. It was at one of them that Kelly—"Mike," of pleasant memory—ventured to introduce a little girl who was eagerly curious to see the Prince, and concealed her among the musicians. The Prince however spied her, and with affected anger taxed Kelly with this intrusion. But he presently had the child on his knee, put her in a good place, and took care that she enjoyed herself. To this Kelly he contrived in a delicate gracious

way to give an annuity of £100, that is, by ordering him to take a free benefit annually, to which he always contributed £100.

An instance of the Prince's lavish tastes may be quoted here. At the Duke of Queensberry's sale of wine in 1810 it was found, to the surprise of the public, that his cellar had been rather poorly furnished; but there were twelve lots of Tokay, which Mr. Christie, after an appropriate harangue, informed the amateurs had cost the noble duke three guineas per bottle at Paris, half a century back. The liquor was put into lots of a dozen, and put up at fifty guineas, on which biddings were immediately made, and it was knocked down at ninety-six guineas; another succeeded at the same enormous price, when two gentlemen agreed to take the whole between them, as they had no opponents; they were found to be an agent of the Prince of Wales, and a friend of a cabinet-maker of the City: his royal highness having eight lots, and the other four.

Though there was hardly any other wine worth notice, it sold for immense sums. The sale wound up with a couple of dozen of liqueur, the name of which was unknown; but which fetched a guinea a bottle.*

Mrs. Fitzherbert was also at Brighton during the season, though perhaps not at the same time as the Prince. Not by any means in low spirits, she gave suppers and balls—one of the latter kept up until five in the morning. Here was also the beautiful Lady Charlemont—much admired, and still recalled by many now living—and the lively Lady Alborough.†

A new influence had now begun to direct his policy and inclinations, and which grew stronger with successive years—that of Lady Hertford, which has been before alluded to. This was a decorous lady of quality, whose connection with her admirer must be accepted as that of a correct and "platonic" kind. Shrewd observers had noticed what Lord Holland calls his usual symptoms of devotion—sufferings from illness and bad health. He would submit to be bled two or three times in the course of a night, and "the surgeons were introduced unknown to each other, to obviate any objections." The reader will therefore understand the supposed attempt at suicide when he was burning with his

* See that curious work, "Personal Memoirs of Pryse Gordon, Esq."

† The agreeable Mrs. Trench described an awkward scene at Cheltenham, where Mrs. Fitzherbert had been judiciously invited by a *gauche* colonel to a fête in honour of the Princess Charlotte's birth. He first introduced his guest as "Regentess," by leading her in before all the ladies of rank, then gave toasts, and descanted on the merits of the Prince and Princess of Wales and "the lovely fruit of their union."

early flame for Mrs. Fitzherbert. It was always considered that Lady Hertford had worked on him to confirm him in his change of political views. This regard he extended to all belonging to her — as in the instance of a later attachment — and Lord Yarmouth, the maturer son of this elderly dame, was long one of his bosom friends and companions.

It was at Manchester House that he became acquainted with an entertaining being—Theodore Hook—whose gifts were after his own heart: those of mimicry, story-telling, and joking. This was to prove a most valuable intimacy, and to bring him profit during the years of conflict with his Queen. Then Hook starting the *John Bull* did his cause infinite service. "We believe," writes Mr. Bareham, in the more unpretending sketch in the "Quarterly Review" which preceded his "Life of Hook," "he owed his first *entrée* to the impression made on Sheridan by his improvisation at the Piazza Tavern; he soon afterwards became familiar with Sheridan's amiable and richly-gifted son Thomas, and through him with various young men of his own standing, who moved in the atmosphere of fashion. Some of these made mention of him to the Marchioness of Hertford, and after he had justified their eulogies by the display of his musical and metrical facility in her ladyship's presence, he was called upon to minister in like fashion to the amusement of the Regent at a supper in Manchester Square. We have heard him describe his presentation to the Prince—his awe at first was something quite terrible—but good-humoured condescension and plenty of champagne by-and-by restored him to himself, and the young man so delighted his royal highness that, as he was leaving the room, he laid his hand on his shoulder and said: 'Mr. Hook, I must see and hear you again.' After a few more evenings at Lady Hertford's, and, we believe, a dinner or two elsewhere, the Regent made inquiry about his position, and, finding that he was without profession or fixed income of any sort, signified his opinion that 'something must be done for Hook.'

"The ladies' tact soon discovered that, though there might be something like petulance in his first address, there was no real presumptuousness in his composition. The wonder had passed rapidly into a favourite throughout Mayfair. He had seen its boudoirs as well as its saloons—and narrowly escaped various dangers incidental to that career—among the rest, from at least one duel (with General Thornton), in which transaction, from first to last, he was allowed to show equal spirit and temper. We have some records of his airier existence also in 'Gilbert Gurney.' The whole scene of the Countess of Wolverhampton's

party, at the end of the first volume, is copied from what occurred at the late Lady Buckingham's—not forgetting the bullock substituted for the cow, and the royal Duke's supper devoured by the Pandeans. But the richness of the harvest he had gathered is apparent in the whole series of his novels. It was in the midst of these gaieties that the Regent smiled on him."

When he was on a visit to Lord Hertford at Hagley a curious incident occurred. Two of the tenants begged to be allowed to have a "good view" of the Regent, and were accordingly stationed in an ante-room through which he was to pass. The hostess having informed the Prince of their eagerness to see him, he good-naturedly and affably advanced to speak to the village lasses: one was so overcome that she fell to the floor fainting, the other remained in a state of daze or stupefaction.

It was in this year that the most important changes in the metropolis were planned; and the bold scheme for adding a new quarter with a park, and streets laid out with taste, which now forms the most effective portion of London, seems to have been prompted by the Regent.

But it was in the year 1813 that the scheme of laying out magnificent streets and buildings, joining a large tract of waste fields, known as Marylebone Park, by one spacious thoroughfare was entered on. Nothing so welcome to the Regent could have been conceived. It opened up prospects of building and planning, and his own architect directed the whole, though the undertaking was under the direction of "The Woods and Forests." Nash conceived the plan of long façades, broken into blocks, then again subdivided into houses, and it must be said that Waterloo Place and the ascent up to Regent Street proper, and the Quadrant (a most effective device, with its original colonnade now removed) all combine to make a most satisfactory and successful design, which modern architects, with the new developments and all the Queen Anne vagaries, have not succeeded in even approaching. Stucco and paint may indeed be the chief "notes," but there is a dignity and effect that is not unworthy of a great city or of a leading and busy quarter full of glittering shops. This important enterprise was completed in a surprisingly short time. Within fifteen years the park was laid out and terraces built.

These improvements included the erection of the houses forming Cumberland Place and Crescent, and the Duke of Portland's property was then built over. Manchester Square was begun by the erection of Manchester House. Lisson Grove, and the district about was gradually covered with houses;

there remained, where Waterloo Place is now, some blocks of old mean-looking streets and dingy houses, quite unsuited to Carlton House, which itself, as the new streets spread away from it, began to look dingy and shabby enough, and was dwarfed by the more pretentious buildings, and by the towers of Westminster, which could be seen rising over its roof.

Some were scandalised at the rash and daring character of the new plans; and it is characteristic to find that some lamented the loss of the new milk, butter, and other produce, purveyed from the fields and market-gardens past Wimpole Street, and which would now have to be supplied from many miles beyond. Some were sarcastic, too, on the number of new churches projected, and which formed a feature in all the plans. But these projects were now only being talked of, and had not yet been put in action.

CHAPTER III.

1811.

A TRUE estimate of Mr. Perceval as a minister has now been pretty fairly arrived at, viz. that he was a man of mediocre or respectable ability, inclined to "trade," as it is called, on a reputation for being a good father and husband, and perhaps for piety.*

It is amusing to read the extravagant terms in which his humble admirers speak of him, and record his various performances. The raptures of men like Mr. Plumer Ward would have been exaggerated if applied to Lord Chatham or his son. Nothing, too, is more unfounded than the statement made by Lord Eldon and others as to his gradually winning his way with the Prince, or the latter "falling in love with him" politically. The truth is the Regent looked on him as his father's minister, and though for a time he had hopes he might find him a pliant tool, he soon was on the verge of a quarrel with him, or intriguing to supplant him. This latter proceeding we will now consider, and a very curious intrigue it is.

To understand the Prince's political conduct, one principle may be assumed: that he was never guided by men of principle, but led by boon companions or men of pleasure—Sheridan, Lords Wellesley, Moira, and Yarmouth; the tribe of MacMahons, Tyrwhitts, Knightons; scheming women, needy officers, adroit doctors—these were his counsellors and directors. Grey, Grenville, Erksine, Romilly, Fox, were tried and found unsuitable. They were too consistent, too straightforward, too honest, to become

* Sydney Smith has expressed this popular view in a well-known and most pleasant passage, praising him for his dutiful and conscientious behaviour "to Mrs. Perceval, the Master and Miss Percevals."

mere instruments or advisers of what was agreeable. But even when he had committed himself to guides of this description, there was, as we have seen, a *camarilla* within, who controlled and checked them, and thus the foolish Prince was ever led by his humours and whims, and the aims of others.

On the Prince's graciously allowing Mr. Perceval and ministers "to wear his uniform," the smart pen of Moore was again at work:

NEW COSTUME OF THE MINISTERS.

Having sent off the troops of brave Major Camac,
With a swinging horse-tail at each valorous back,
And such helmets, God bless us! as never deck'd any
Male creature before, except Signor Giovanni—
"Let's see," says the R—g—t (like Titus, perplex'd
With the duties of empire), "whom *shall* I dress next?"

He looks in the glass—but perfection is there,
Wig, whiskers, and chin-tufts all right to a hair;
Not a single *ex*-curl on his forehead he traces—
For curls are like Ministers, strange as the case is,
The *falser* they are, the more firm in their places.

His coat he next views—but the coat who could doubt?
For his Y—rm—th's own Frenchified hand cut it out;
Every pucker and seam were made matters of State,
And a grand Household Council was held on each plait!

Then whom shall he dress? shall he new-rig his brother,
Great C—mb—rl—d's Duke, with some kickshaw or other?
And kindly invent him more Christian-like shapes
For his feather-bed neckcloths and pillory capes?

Ah no!—here his ardour would meet with delays,
For the Duke had been lately pack'd up in new stays,
So complete for the winter, he saw very plain
'Twould be devilish hard work to *un*pack him again!

So, what's to be done?—there's the Ministers, bless 'em!—
As he *made* the puppets, why shouldn't he *dress* 'em?
"An excellent thought!—call the tailors—be nimble—
Let Cum bring his spyglass, and H—rtf—d her thimble;
While Y—rm—th shall give us, in spite of all quizzers,
The last Paris cut with his true Gallic scissors."

So saying, he calls C—stl—r—gh, and the rest
Of his Heaven-born statesmen, to come and be dress'd.
While Y—rm—th, with snip-like and brisk expedition,
Cuts up, all at once, a large Cath'lic petition
In long tailors' measures (the P——e crying "Well done!")
And first *puts in hand* my Lord Chancellor Eld—n.

Lord Wellesley, a man of pleasure and dissipated, but certainly of talents, independent and manly, had two creditable ends for his policy, which he always kept in view—the one a fair and generous support for his brother, then fighting the battles of his country in Spain, the other a loyal and liberal treatment of the Catholics. From this latter position he never swerved. He was now a member of a Government where neither of these principles was considered, and was doing his best to thwart the head of it. In September, when Mr. Perceval and his friends were comforting themselves with having gained the Regent, he was already being closeted with him, and forwarding his own favourite ends. He had pressed on him the possibility of a bold and dazzling foreign policy, which would add prestige to his regency.

In the meantime he continued to be a thorn in the side of the Prime Minister, and at councils was studiously obstructive and haughtily insolent. After a quarrel, owing to his having contested a grant of a million in aid of his brother, wrung from the minister "like drops of blood," the latter amiably offered him two places in succession for his son, which were declined, with the contemptuous speech that he would consult the Prince upon it. When the ministers begged the Regent to be allowed to wear the Regent's uniform in honour of his birthday, and for that occasion only, the haughty nobleman declined to sign the application, but asked it in person, and was graciously privileged not only on that but on all other occasions.*

It becomes entertaining to follow the network of speculation and intrigue that was thus set on foot by "the Prince's old friends," "the Prince's friends," and the Prince's advisers, who were neither old nor new friends. They were all working against one another, so it was hard for the distracted Regent to know how to act. But new influences were fatal to the old. Lord Moira, one of the "friends," thus gravely lectured the old friends on his policy:

"Let me honestly say," wrote Lord Moira, "that Lord Grenville's immediate connections have to charge themselves considerably with the present state of things. Then a tone so unconciliatory was used towards the Prince, as inevitably repelled his dispositions, and laid him open to the representations of those who insinuated that he would put himself into thraldom if he persevered in his original plan. To clinch the matter there came that impolitic opposition, by Lord Grenville's particular friends, in the House of Commons, to the reappointment of the Duke of York."†

"One thing seems evident," wrote Lord Bulkely, "that our

* "Buckingham Papers," pp. 126, 127. † Auckland, iv. 371.

friend of Dropmore has no chance of being our future pilot, and that the Prince will proscribe him and Grey."* But Lord Grey was quite sanguine, and believed that the Prince intended to bring in his old friends. "Our friend of Dropmore," on the other hand, took the gloomiest view, and declared that the Prince had not the smallest disposition towards what are called his old friends. "He has, I am confident, no plan of conduct whatever, but is governed from day to day by the two people that have taken him." In aid of these various schemes, negotiations were going on with the Whig Dukes, and it was given out "with great exultation that the Prince had gained over the great houses of Norfolk, Percy, and Cavendish." All the royal family too were eager to have Lord Wellesley at the head of affairs, for patronage was to be given over to the Prince, and he was besides to be handsomely treated as to debts and allowances, and established by some brilliant *coups* of foreign policy.

All, therefore, was *couleur de rose* when, owing to the influence of the Duke of Cumberland, a coolness took place. The Chancellor was called in, and these champions of ascendency succeeded in touching the Prince in his Protestant feelings, and persuading him that the late behaviour of the Catholics was insolent and offensive, so that he was heard to declare that he considered their conduct purely hostile to him, as showing a distrust of him when he should become his own master; that so long as they assumed this menacing attitude, there should be no change that would favour their objects. It was thought that this afforded him a plausible pretence for "opportunism," of leaving things as they were, the part most consonant to his love of ease and personal timidity of character.

This was practically destroying the old party of the Prince's friends. "I can now tell you," wrote a judicious observer, "for I know it, that your friends are distinctly excluded from any chance of success, whatever change may take place. On this depend."† And he added a characteristic reason which showed he was not unskilled in human character. It was because the Prince had already used his friends so ill that no concession or recommendation on his part could set such a compound fracture as had taken place.‡ With this may be contrasted

* Auckland, iv. 373. † "Buckingham Papers," p. 157.

‡ This was from that anonymous correspondent who writes such piquant letters the authorship of which has puzzled Sir G. Cornwall Lewis and others. A clue may be found in the following. Many years ago, when the papers and correspondence of the Buckingham family were put up to auction there was among the lots in the catalogue one thus described:

the behaviour of the otherwise worthy Perceval, which was certainly undignified.

His eagerness to conciliate Lord Wellesley will have been noted. In this view he seems to have put up with very brusque treatment and many snubs; as, when the bishopric of Oxford fell vacant the Prince at once thought of his old tutor Jackson (?), and in an interview with the minister announced his intention of conferring it on him. The following animated conversation took place: "On that point, sir, I am positively pledged," objected Mr. Perceval. "Positively pledged, Mr. Perceval!" said the Prince, "positively pledged to give away one of my bishoprics? I don't understand you." "I mean," said the other humbly, "that it was the King's positive and declared intention to give it to Dean Legge." "Mr. Perceval," replied the Prince insolently, "if I had any direct intimation of what were really the King's wishes upon the subject, I would not only make Dean Legge Bishop of Oxford, but Archbishop of Canterbury, if it were in my power. But as that is not the case, I shall make my own bishop. And further, I desire never more to hear what were the King's wishes upon such subjects through a third person."* This sharp rebuke shows that the Prince was shrewd and sagacious enough; but the secret of this bitterness was really owing to what was a sore subject with him, refusal of money; and here the minister, no doubt looking to his own interests with the nation and the King, declined to be complaisant. He had consented to a grant of £150,000 to defray the extra expenses of the regency, but had suddenly changed his views and reduced it to £100,000. On this the Prince made the following angry speech: "Sir, I am not afraid of your bringing the whole of my debts before the country, provided you don't misrepresent me." No one seems to have recalled the magnanimous declaration in which only a few months before the Regent had declined to burden the nation with any fresh demands, saying he was not eager for money.

The most singular incident in the history of cabinets is that one member of the Government should have constituted himself

"126—Stuart (Mr.), editor of 'The Oracle,' Secret Correspondence with the Marquis of Buckingham, 41 letters. These letters are mostly of great length, many being of ten or twelve pages; they enter very fully into the details of the political movements of the day, and evince a degree of close intimacy with persons of high position. A large portion of the correspondence, most relative to private affairs of individuals, is unpublished." This is an almost exact description of the published anonymous documents. Before the sale the letters were withdrawn. Stuart was brother of the "Dan Stuart" so pleasantly described by Charles Lamb.

* "Buckingham Papers," p. 172.

the Prince's official advocate and champion, in opposition to its chief and the rest; Lord Wellesley insisting on the Prince's rights in an almost hostile manner. As the Regent's agent he informed Mr. Perceval that what was required was that the King should have a suitable establishment, sufficient for his comfort and rank; but that the full Civil List, state, etc., should be transferred to the Regent, who would give up his allowance as Prince of Wales. The Queen and Princesses, as the Prince had taken care to assure them at the beginning, should have separate allowances.* This view the minister declined to accept in its entirety, and proposed that the Regent should maintain the King out of the Civil List to the extent of £100,000 a-year. He agreed, however, to add £50,000 from the Prince's old allowance, so that the balance would only be £50,000.

But the strange incidents of this little struggle to overthrow by personal influence and favouritism the constituted Government is minutely unfolded in a curious account given by Lord Wellesley himself to a friend, coloured, no doubt, by his impulsive habit of viewing things. From it we get a clear idea of the turns and shifts of this uncertain prince.†

"When the turn of good fortune on the Continent had come the Prince Regent learned from Count Münster, the Hanoverian minister, what great openings there were for adding to England's prestige. On this topic Lord Wellesley used to enlarge until the Prince grew fired with enthusiasm. This, Lord Wellesley says, was a bond of union. The Prince and his brothers were even anxious to send out an army to Hanover, but from this Lord Wellesley dissuaded him. He proposed even that all these plans should be kept secret from the other ministers; but this his friend dissuaded him from. Meanwhile Mr. Perceval was complaining to Lord Wellesley "that he despaired of getting anything done; that the Prince Regent talked incessantly, and would seldom listen to business; that he frequently went away without having shown one of his papers."

Towards the end of the summer the Prince Regent began to speak to him on the subject of the ministry he proposed to form at the end of his restrictions; he pressed for Lord Wellesley's advice without stating his own intentions. Lord Wellesley, after alluding to his favourite principles of carrying out a bold policy on the Continent, still advised him, if he had given a pledge to any particular set of men, to keep his word and commence his

* Lord Wellesley to Perceval, "Life of Perceval," ii. 227.

† It seems to have been drawn up by Colonel Shawe, his secretary and friend, and will be found in the Duke of Wellington's "Supplementary Despatches," vii. 257.

government "with unblemished honour." This the adviser felt would throw him out of office, and he fancied the Prince's idea was to have Lords Grey and Grenville, who had too many of their own friends to provide for to offer him anything. The Regent, he believed, proposed to retain the present men with an infusion of his own friends, but getting rid of Perceval. No doubt he wished to have a little party of his own in the Cabinet whom he could influence, just as he was now working on Wellesley. He wished to put an end to the distinction between the Pitt and Fox parties, and was continually saying: "For God's sake, is it not time to leave at rest the ashes of the two great men, now no more, who are quoted at every step?" In these councils the Prince pressed his friend for his opinions on the Catholic question, who enforced on him that something must be done for the Catholics, not, certainly, so long as there was a chance of its being painful to the King; but once the restrictions were removed, he would have an opportunity. The result of all this is amusingly described. The Prince took up these views rapturously; "they were exactly his own," except—an important exception too—that the matter was not to be touched at all during the King's life. Lord Wellesley applauded this filial delicacy, but urged: "You cannot refuse to listen to the Catholics; if you create peers and give away the garters, the same reasoning applies to both." This staggered the Prince, who declared that the argument convinced him.

"This was now become the favourite topic at Carlton House. Lord Wellesley was made to repeat his intended arguments over and over again; the Prince always swearing the suggestions were all his own (as is usual when anything pleases him). He was desired to state in the House that such were the Prince's own opinions." But he excused himself, saying it was inconsistent. Even when the Prince found that Lord Wellesley's speech had made a noise, he complained that "Wellesley had not dealt fairly by him in concealing his share in it." The trusting foolish lord came at last to think that he was certain presently to dislodge the minister, and he himself to be placed at the head of affairs.

Meanwhile all this talk and flourish might have been accepted as "certain forecast of the Regent's going no farther in that direction." Other talk and councils were going on at Hertford House, and it was artfully suggested to the Prince, that now that he was wanting money allowances for the household, it was more likely that one of Perceval's "reputation for economy and frugality would be more readily followed by the House than Lord Wellesley, who is considered an extravagant fellow." The

Prince determined prudently therefore to retain Mr. Perceval until he had carried the Bill. Thus in every part of these transactions he was veered about by his own interest. His friend now began to have misgivings. He was naturally on cold and distrustful terms with the colleagues he was undermining, but disdaining to act cordially, absented himself as much as he could. He took the same course with the Prince.

At this time a horse had trodden on the Prince's foot, and indeed, apart from this, he had been far from well, complaining of strange symptoms in his head. His fingers had so swelled that his rings had to be sawn off. It was during his convalescence that Lord Wellesley found occasion to strengthen his influence, dwelling on topics likely to touch his vanity—the war in Spain, combinations with the Northern Courts, etc.*

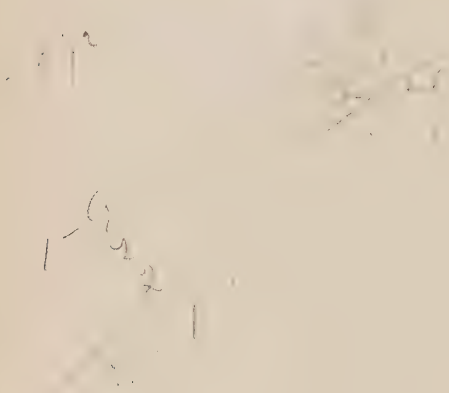
On Nov. 27th, he writes the Prime Minister: "As I reached Oatlands this morning at half-past twelve, the Princesses arrived from Windsor, which event prevented me from seeing the Prince until a very late hour. I am but this moment arrived in town, and have had no dinner, and am so much tired (partly from the extreme heat of the room at Oatlands) that I should have no power of rendering justice to any subject of public business to-night, even if I could reach you in any reasonable time. The subject of my audience to-day was Sweden; but the Prince generally stated to me the same ideas which I have already mentioned to you, with much increased earnestness, and indeed on some points with considerable force. He informed me that he had seen the Queen yesterday, and that her Majesty entirely approved all his views respecting the King, the household, and the settlement for the Queen and the Princesses. He continues to think that the dignity of the King and the comfort of his situation will be best provided for by a separate establishment, under a new office of the highest rank. That the Regent should have the whole Civil List, and the full state, as well as power, of the Crown, and should resign his allowances as Prince of Wales. That the Queen should have an independent allowance, and the Princesses the same. He considers this part of the arrangement to be inseparable from the settlement of the Regency on a permanent basis. He will state many very strong considerations in favour of his plan, and appears intent on carrying it into execution. He said to-day that, after the discussion with you shall have taken place (unless you agreed), he should wait to receive your propositions in writing, in order that he might

* See Mr. McCullagh Torrens' interesting memoir, "The Marquess Wellesley," p. 465, *et seq.*, from which I take what follows.

answer them. I rather understood this to be a proof of his determination to abide by his own ideas than a symptom of any intention to depart from them in consequence of what he might receive in writing from you . . . The Prince Regent," he writes again to the Prime Minister, "sent an order to me, which reached me at this place last night, directing me to attend his royal highness at Oatlands, at twelve to-day. He began by asking me whether I had seen the paper which he had received from you respecting the new settlement of the Regency. I said (as you know I must have said) that I had not seen the paper, but that I was acquainted with the substance of its contents. He then communicated your paper to me, and said that he intended to state his ideas in writing on the whole subject; that he was aware of the impropriety of desiring me to offer any advice in the present state of the question, but that he wished to declare his sentiments freely to me. I thought it was my duty to inform his royal highness that I could not, in this stage of the discussion, offer any opinion on the subject, either of your paper or of his intended answer; and as this sentiment agreed with his own feeling he did not ask any opinion from me; but he proceeded to express nearly the same views of the subject which he had stated to you and to me on former occasions. I collected from his royal highness's conversation that your paper had produced no change in his opinion, and that he entertained a strong persuasion that his statement would have great weight, and would satisfy you that you had taken an erroneous view of the question."

Mr. Perceval replied: "I thank you for your letter, and regret extremely that his royal highness continues so attached to his former opinion respecting the new settlement of the Regency. I had called a Cabinet meeting for this day, at two o'clock." On this he repaired to him, remaining "four hours" at his first sitting, on which the prudent Yarmouth hinted "that nothing annoyed the Prince so much as a long audience; he could not bear the sight of a man for a week after." He also offered to give him hints in future of the same kind. It was, of course, the Prince that declaimed the most part of the time; he was eager for his "old Cornwall arrears." But his adviser pointed out to him that he could not in honour ask for them, as his claims had been abandoned by his agent in the House of Commons. The Prince said this had been done without his authority ("a favourite expedient of his," says his friend). Seeing that *tracasserie* of some kind was on foot, it was natural that Perceval and his colleagues should not take Lord Wellesley much into their confidence. The latter pressed to be allowed to resign, but neither

the Prince nor Mr. Perceval wished him to retire. He really knew not what to do, as he might lose all chances by withdrawing. He wished, of course, to avoid the mortification of finding Mr. Perceval chosen as minister, and of being dismissed by him; and thus, in an irresolute way, weakly consented to stay on, little suspecting that they were only waiting to arrange their plans. He owns that he was tormented with reports of Lord Castlereagh being offered his place; but the Prince kept on assuring him that he should have full notice of any attempt of the kind being made. When he learned from his friends that Mr. Perceval was telling everyone he was to be retained as Prime Minister—it was too late.



CHAPTER IV.

1812.

Parliament met on January 7th, with great irritation and excitement on both sides. The Catholic question came at once to the front; and the other questions of the household, the debts, together with his own illness, almost distracted the unhappy Regent, whose situation was deserving of commiseration. His early and continued excesses were telling on his health. He was growing large and corpulent; his recent attack filled him with nervous apprehensions; and the numbness in his head he fancied was a symptom of paralysis. The Queen, too, now representing a distinct interest, but feeling that her rule was slipping from her, was working through the Chancellor and the Council to retain as much power and influence as possible for herself, and, as the Speaker said, was voracious in her claims, harassing her son even when he was ill. She was most eager that her daughters should not have independent establishments; while the Prince was inclined to grant them. On the Catholic question it seems he would have preferred the old *laissez-faire* policy. Many of the Cabinet were beginning to adopt this view; and the Prince himself, loudly complaining of the way he had been treated, affected to declare that the Papists ought to get relief, but at the proper time. He and Colonel Tyrwhitt, another of the "Prince's men," in a conversation with the Speaker about the same time, expressed the same view—that "it was to be wished the other ministers would agree to resist it only on the point of time. Could not the Prince say that in the King's present state it was not to be done?" To which appeal the Speaker sensibly replied that there must be a *solidarité* between the Prince and his ministers, and that what they said must be

accepted as his views; in short, finessing would not do. Further evidence of his irresolution was, that after offering himself to dine with the Prime Minister, and fixing a day, he now excused himself, "conscious," as Colonel Tyrwhitt said, "that he was watched, and that misinterpretations would be put upon his dining at this time; but he would dine with him on some other occasion."*

But the Opposition were not inclined to adopt this waiting policy. Lord Grenville had forced the question on, and the leader of the Opposition in the other House also brought it forward. It was no doubt pressed on the Regent that this was an affront. The introduction of so embarrassing a question would make it impossible to have such men as advisers. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that by the 20th of January Colonel Tyrwhitt was giving out that "the Regent would not increase his father's miseries by granting the Catholics' demands, but would not deny them so as to extinguish hope." Anyhow, the struggle for supremacy between Lord Wellesley and the ministry of which he formed part became more interesting.

In reference to this matter Mr. Ward gives a curious statement. "There was," he says, "a meeting, it seems, at Ponsonby's at which he, among ninety gentlemen, was present. Ponsonby sent for them in order to relate a message which he had received through Sheridan from the Regent. The message was, 'that the Catholic question was so far given up by the ministers that it was no longer to be considered as a ministerial question; and that everyone was to be allowed to take what line he would, without being considered as renouncing engagements to the Government.' Ponsonby, however, added that at the same time that he received this, he had also received a communication from some, either of the ministers or persons nearly connected with them (I did not learn which), by which he was given to understand this was all a misapprehension."

"The next day (Sunday), upon Lord Moira's calling at Carlton House by the Prince's order, the Prince sent out his page-in-waiting to him, to tell him that he had been so drunk the preceding night, he was not well enough to see him, but ordered the page to tell him that he (the Prince) had settled the Catholic question, which was not any longer to form a Government question. The Prince, later on Sunday, said the same thing to Sheridan, who asked if he might be authorised to say that from the Prince to Ponsonby; and the Prince said: 'By all means.' You see in this we have only the story of one side; but it remains to see what Perceval's story will be."

* Colchester, "Diary," ii. 354.

It was a bold game that he was playing, but it was to fail. He saw that the only way of release from his troubles would be in getting ministers to adopt this new-found principle and thus save his own consistency. He accordingly insisted that Lord Wellesley should meet Perceval, Lord Liverpool, and the Chancellor at Carlton House to consider the matter. A very warm discussion was opened by the Prince desiring that the question should be considered on its merits, without regard to the opinions previously expressed by any of the parties present. He himself cordially seconded his friend's views on the "opportunist" theory, and the matter ended, as might be expected, by Mr. Perceval and the Protestant party adopting this view.*

Lord Holland seems to have gauged the Prince thoroughly in his fluctuations on the Catholic question, and describes how he came to warn him seriously that his popularity in Ireland, at least, would be in peril, if a belief got abroad that he was against the claims. The Prince declared to him that, "if he took an active part, it might occasion a relapse in the King, and expose him to imputations which he could not bear. He announced that he would never take any part in a subject that was hostile to the King, and by that declaration he would abide. He then seemed to hint that Lord Moira's declaration in the House had been authorised by him." Later, Lord Holland brought Lord Fingall, the representative of the Catholics, to Carlton House, where "the Prince spoke for an hour-and-a-half by the French clock. He recounted at great length, but more adroitly than distinctly, the history of his opinions on the Roman Catholic question." He did not say distinctly that he was for admitting them to Parliament and offices, but "implied his opinions," such as would satisfy Lord Fingall. He censured the ministry of 1805, but authorised his visitor to repeat that his opinions were unchanged. He doubted the policy of bringing matters on now; but he hoped he was mistaken. He denied that he had prompted Lord Moira. "Of course he will vote with you. He cannot do otherwise." Lord Fingall departed "highly satisfied." The Prince's conduct of this interview gives an excellent idea of his cleverness and art. No one knew so well how to ring the changes on "opportunism," and make that useful auxiliary serve as covert for denial. In this device, however, he had many to imitate him.

The result was most mortifying for the Catholic champion; for thus the ground was, as it were, cut from beneath his feet, and the lever for supplanting the ministry lost. The Regent, forgetting all that he had held out to his friend, only thought of his own comfort, which had been secured. The other at once

* "Buckingham Papers," p. 216.

informed him that he could no longer serve under Mr. Perceval, and would only delay his resignation until new arrangements could be made. But Perceval, perceiving that the man who had plotted against him was baffled, now saw his advantage, and insisted on his immediate resignation, declaring that the Government could not go on. The Prince, scenting fresh troubles, objected, declaring that his resignation was "only *in petto*," and "that it would put him in great difficulty, and produce him much uneasiness of mind," etc.—a characteristic reason. Perceval insisted pertinaciously on getting rid of his colleague, and the Prince had to yield. When Lord Castlereagh was named as his successor, the Regent praised the choice, as indeed he might, for he was connected with the Hertford *camarilla*; the other replied that he had not proposed the matter to him, but that he was certain to accept. But that nobleman haughtily answered, "that he would be stopgap to no man; but that when the restrictions were at an end, if the Prince chose to make him a formal offer, he would consider it with humble duty and acknowledgment." Much mortified, Perceval then proposed to take in Lord Sidmouth, when the Prince warmly exclaimed: "Is it possible, Mr. Perceval, that you are ignorant of my feelings and sentiments towards that person? I now tell you I never will have confidence in him, or in any person who forces him on me. If after this you choose to employ him, be it so; but I warn you that you must take all the responsibility upon yourself." He repeatedly pressed this measure on the Prince, and at last finding that he could not succeed, he proposed that, as Lord Wellesley must be retained, he, Mr. Perceval, should be empowered to state that he possessed the Prince's sole and exclusive confidence." This the Prince positively and repeatedly refused in a tone of sarcasm and disgust.

These scenes seemed to have been reported to Lord Wellesley by the Prince himself, and by the former retailed to Lord Temple's anonymous correspondent.*

Allowing for exaggeration, there could be no doubt this took place, for the Prince was exasperated about the question of his debts. Sympathy would go with the minister who was thus flouted through the agency of a subordinate, only for his mild amiable endurance in accepting such treatment. At these interviews was given a good specimen of the Prince's "sharpness" and that sort of "cleverness" in conversation with which he was certainly gifted. Perceval had stated that Mr. Yorke's health was so bad that he was to resign at the expiration of the restrictions. "And why, Mr. Perceval," asked the Prince, "should

* "Buckingham Papers," i. 219.

the necessity exist for Lord Wellesley, and not for Mr. Yorke, of immediate resignation?" To this the minister could make no reply.

This difficulty thus staved over allowed the Prince to continue his display of vacillation. One day he asked Lord Wellesley: "Would you have any objection to shake hands with Lord Grenville?" The other declared he had not the least, and that he had the greatest regard for him. He indeed made himself the Prince's most pliant instrument. "His influence over him is hourly increasing, and all the people about the Prince are entirely in his interests. For the rest, having adopted as the groundwork all the Prince's views and politics, both foreign and domestic, he is willing to act with any man, or set of men." Yet this devotion was requited by abandonment, and his fate was already settled.

In the preceding November the Duchess of York had given a ball to introduce the young Princess, and the fashionable world was horrified to learn that in dancing with his daughter, "and leading her briskly along, his right foot came in contact with the leg of a sofa, by which two tendons of his foot were broken." Such was the Court newsman's account. Private letters brought a rather different story of the accident. It seems that one evening they were dancing the Highland fling, and there was a laugh in making Adam, the Prince's familiar and a Scotchman, teach the young Princess, when the Regent attempted to show her the proper step, and in doing so wrenched his ankle. How such a misadventure came about is not stated, but the way he was afflicted by it was extraordinary. For ten days he never quitted his bed, complaining of violent pains and spasmodic affections, for which he took immoderate doses of laudanum every three hours.* Lord Yarmouth, coming to town, reported that he was taking as much as seven hundred drops a day—twelve hundred, according to others.† This unmanly disinclination to bear pain made him persist in the practice in spite of the physicians, who found him sunk in the utmost despondency, quite enervated and prostrated. They prescribed a familiar medicine of the most drastic character, but he still persisted in his laudanum, which he said relieved his pains. He would lie on his stomach for hours, hear nothing of business, sign nothing, to the great annoyance of the ministers. Truly a pitiable picture. His worthy brother of Cumberland went about saying "it was all sham," and that he could get up and be perfectly well if he pleased, which was indeed true enough; for, as Mr. Fremantle wrote, it was likely that he became so nervous at the difficulties

* "Buckingham Papers—The Regency," i. 145.

† Colchester, "Diary," ii. 348.

before him, and the necessity of taking some resolve as the day of decision drew near, that he could not bear to face it.*

Always to be associated with the history of the Prince was that of that strange group known as the "Royal Brothers"—the six Dukes—one or other of whom was always to be attracting public attention. The Duke of York had now been restored to the office of Commander-in-Chief; its occupant, the veteran Sir David Dundas, having retired. This step excited some disgust, but was accepted. In the House of Commons it was again vehemently commented on by the Liberals, and Lord Grenville's friends were especially bitter, which was, of course, considered a fresh offence.

The Duke of Cumberland, long notorious as the most "ill-conditioned" of the band, had formed a strict alliance with Lord Eldon, and had contrived to establish a sort of ascendency over his eldest brother. Both would come down together to see the King on Sunday; and with such elements in alliance, it is not surprising to hear that the Queen and the Prince were now "on very bad terms."† This fraternal alliance had weakened the one between him and the Duke of York, whose visits to Carlton House became less frequent, while those of the other Duke increased. As he contrived to make the Chancellor one of the party, the result was that the influence of such eminent Protestant champions began to be felt. This, however, will be shown later.‡ However, before the end of the year, this royal brother also had fallen out of favour. In fact, "a complete quarrel" had taken place on a subject relating to a German officer of the 15th Dragoons. The Regent henceforth determined never to see him alone, and when he called always had someone in the room.

The Duke of Sussex was a consistent Whig, and usually opposed to his brother. Another of the royal brothers, the Duke of Clarence, was attracting general attention by some ridiculous freak, which might reasonably excite suspicions of his sanity. The pursuit of the well-known heiress, Miss Long, by Mr. Wellesley Pole, was being watched with great interest, when of a sudden the Duke of Clarence struck in. "Before he went down to Ramsgate he wrote to her to offer his hand, which she declined in firm and respectful terms. From Ramsgate he offered himself three or four times, and, after his return, sent her an abstract of the Royal Marriage Act, which, he said, the Regent had consented to have altered for his benefit, and conveying to her the Queen's

* The Queen, too, had been ill, and was only saved from death by apoplexy by a fortunate bleeding in her foot. She had actually taken leave of her children.

† "Buckingham Papers—The Regency," i. 134. ‡ Ibid. i. 155.

best wishes and regards. Neither of these personages had been consulted on the matter. Upon finding that she had accepted Mr. Pole, he wrote at once to Lord Keith to propose for Miss Mercer, who, in the most decided terms, rejected him, notwithstanding which he went to stay at Lord Keith's. Presently, the Duke of Cumberland amiably made Mrs. Jordan acquainted with the real motive of the Duke of Clarence's proposals, on which the lady wrote a furious letter, with another to her informant, thanking him for the information, but directing them wrongly, in consequence of which there was a scene between the royal brothers. Altogether," writes this sagacious correspondent of Lord Temple, "the conduct of these illustrious personages is a most melancholy and alarming feature in the difficulties which every hour increase upon us; and one can hardly impute it to any other ground but an affliction of the same nature as that under which the King labours."*

The Duke of Kent, another royal brother, was a prince with a grievance, considering himself the most ill-treated man in the kingdom. He had certainly been dealt with in the harshest manner by his father when in possession of his senses, but he, like the rest, had now to look to the risen sun. But later on we shall hear of the Royal Brethren.

While the Prince was telling his friend what brave words he had used to the Prime Minister, and Lord Wellesley had discovered that his own treatment had been "unmannerly," the Prince had made up his mind to retain the minister. Lord Wellesley's resignation took place on the 17th. The various conversations with the Prince as to finding a substitute were on the two or three following days, and on the 22nd Perceval wrote to Lord Wellington, "that his royal highness has no intention of looking to any other person for forming an administration at the present time than myself, nor of looking to any change of it at the approaching period of the expiration of the restrictions of the regency, but such as I may find necessary."† Indeed, all through, Perceval seems to have informed his friends that he was secure, and this may account for Lord Eldon and others describing how he had gained on the Prince. He was sagacious enough to see that the minister had a certain strength of respectability and even popularity, while the Wellesleys, Moiras, and

* Some letters of his to a German lady, in which a morganatic marriage is maintained to have taken place, have recently been published. From the exaggerated style and mistakes, they must be considered as apocryphal as the continuation of "Yorick's Letters to Eliza." Yet their claims have been gravely discussed.

† "Life of Perceval," ii. 261.

Sheridans, with the "Lords G. and G.," were but precarious supporters. It was tempting to have a creature of his own as Prime Minister, but if stability were wanting the experiment was hardly worth making.

It must be said his situation was a most embarrassing one. He felt that he was expected, to some extent, to call on his old friends for assistance; and yet there can be no doubt that assistance would have only added to his embarrassments. The long public support extended to the Perceval-Liverpool administration that followed showed that it was not so distasteful to the country, while it seems almost certain that a ministry of his "old friends," distracted by faction and intrigue, could not have stood long. This is the first point in his vindication. The second is, that years before he had publicly dissociated himself from them. The only course he found open was to offer them a minor share in the Government, in taking which step he no doubt must have suspected that his offer would have been declined. But in the game of politics there is always a certain amount of insincerity, and the Regent could not claim to be a purist. With this qualification it will be found that he has been dealt with somewhat harshly and unreasonably, and that he made many and successive attempts at conciliating his old allies by offers not at all uncommon in the history of coalitions.

We shall now deal with this curious and much-debated episode, which, I may venture to say, has never hitherto been fully or so minutely unfolded.

The term of the restrictions being at hand, it was natural that the Regent should think of the old combination with "Lords G. and G." We have thus approached that much-talked-of crisis when a fresh offer was to be made to these two lords. It may be doubted if Lord Grenville could have formed an administration, owing to the lack of sympathy between himself and the advanced wing of the Liberals; and, more recently, his advocacy of the Catholics seemed an attempt to force the hand of the Prince. But there is another view which has been overlooked, viz. a sort of divergence between him and his friend and ally, Lord Grey. The latter, all through, seemed to have faith in the Prince. He urged on his friends the necessity of keeping "perfectly quiet," and exhibiting no distrust. "For himself he had little doubt that the Prince really entertained the intention which he voluntarily professed both to him and Lord Grenville last winter; "for," he adds, "will any failure in the execution of such an intention make me think that it has not had a sincere existence? The same cause which has long delayed its execution may finally prevent it altogether, or, what is more probable, lead to some

such proposal as you hint at—a coalition."* This was like the generous soul of Grey.

It need not be said that to such views Lord Grenville was totally opposed. He spoke with contempt of the Regent and imputed to him the least creditable motives. The Prince had even told Lord Grey, that though he would gladly take him on and half-a-dozen of his party, "he would not consent to be shackled by his associate." And of this feeling Lord Grenville seemed to have an instinct when he spoke later of the attempts at sowing jealousy between him and his friend.

It is characteristic that the Prince should have felt later well disposed to Lord Grenville, and should have even hated Lord Grey, who had construed his intentions so magnanimously. But this is ever found in weak minds. Still one can have no doubt at this time and for the moment, the Prince was sincere and in earnest; and it will be seen what influences, apart from the growing difficulty of the situation, were brought to bear on his pliant mind.

Suddenly, and only a few days before the well-known letter to the Duke of York appeared, the Speaker, always well informed, heard that the new arrangement was considered at Carlton House as only a bit of patchwork. On the 9th Mr. Perceval had an interview with the Prince, of so private a character that he did not consider himself at liberty to communicate to his Cabinet what had passed. The step was already resolved upon; for Lord Eldon, a sturdy old Tory, seems to have scented out what was being planned, and then with a certain bluntness declined to have anything to do with it.

On the following day there was much excitement and speculation. It was reported confidently by Lord Lauderdale that the dismissal was at hand. Yet on this very day a most important step had been taken, and the Regent had addressed a letter to his brother, the Duke of York, commissioning him to negotiate with Lords Grey and Grenville. The letter was as follows:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

"Carlton House, Feb. 13, 1812.

"My dearest Brother,

"As the restrictions on the exercise of the royal authority will shortly expire, when I must make my arrangements for the future administration of the powers with which I am invested, I think it right to communicate to you those sentiments which I was withheld from expressing at an earlier period of the session,

* Letter of Lord Grey, "Life and Opinions," p. 279.

by my earnest desire that the expected motion on the affairs of Ireland might undergo the deliberate discussion of Parliament, unmixed with any other consideration. I think it hardly necessary to call your recollection to the recent circumstances under which I assumed the authority delegated to me by Parliament. At a moment of unexampled difficulty and danger, I was called upon to make a selection of persons to whom I should entrust the functions of the executive government. My sense of duty to our royal father solely decided that choice; and every private feeling gave way to considerations which admitted of no doubt or hesitation. I trust I acted, in that respect, as the genuine representative of the august person whose functions I was appointed to discharge; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that such was the opinion of persons for whose judgment and honourable principles I entertained the highest respect. In various instances, as you well know, where the law of the last session left me at full liberty, I waived any personal gratification, in order that his Majesty might resume, on his restoration to health, every power and prerogative belonging to his crown. I certainly am the last person in the kingdom to whom it can be permitted to despair of our royal father's recovery. A new era is now arrived, and I cannot but reflect with satisfaction on the events which have distinguished the short period of my restricted regency. Instead of suffering in the loss of any of her possessions by the gigantic force which has been employed against them, Great Britain has added most important acquisitions to her empire. The national faith has been preserved inviolate to our allies; and if character is strength, as applied to a nation, the increased and increasing reputation of his Majesty's arms will show to the nations of the Continent how much they may still achieve when animated by a glorious spirit of resistance to a foreign yoke. In the critical situation of the war in the Peninsula, I shall be most anxious to avoid any measure that can lead my allies to suppose that I mean to depart from the present system. Perseverance alone can achieve the great object in question; and I cannot withhold my approbation from those who have honourably distinguished themselves in support of it. I have no predilections to indulge, no resentments to gratify, no objects to attain, but such as are common to the whole empire. If such is the leading principle of my conduct (and I can appeal to the past, in evidence of what the future will be), I flatter myself I shall meet with the support of Parliament and of a candid and enlightened nation. Having made this communication of my sentiments in this new and extraordinary crisis of our affairs, I cannot conclude without expressing the gratification I

could feel, if some of those persons with whom the early habits of my public life were formed would strengthen my hands, and constitute a part of my government. With such support, and aided by a vigorous and united administration formed on the most liberal basis, I shall look with additional confidence to a prosperous issue of the most arduous contest in which Great Britain ever was engaged. You are authorised to communicate these sentiments to Lord Grey, who, I have no doubt, will make them known to Lord Grenville. I am always, my dearest Frederick, your affectionate Brother,

"GEORGE, P. R.

"P.S.—I shall send a copy of this letter immediately to Mr. Perceval."*

It will be noted that the bitterness of the Prince's hostility was shown in the communications being directed to Lord Grey, "who, he had no doubt, would make them known to Lord Grenville," as though he were indifferent whether they ever reached that address.

The Morning Chronicle of February 15th was the first to let the public know what had occurred. The noblemen applied to were indignant, and agreed that it was a mere device to extort a refusal. The view they took was that it was "meant only to make a case against us;" and it may seem to have some foundation. Some margin may be allowed for the utopian view of the Prince, which will be explained presently. The interview between the two noblemen and the Duke of York succeeded, which was a highly curious one. They first handed him their reply, which was to the following effect:

LORDS GREY AND GRENVILLE TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

"February 15th, 1812.

"SIR,

"We beg most humbly to express to your Royal Highness our dutiful acknowledgments for the gracious and condescending manner in which you have had the goodness to communicate to us the letter of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, on the subject of the arrangements to be now made for the future

* Lord Grenville states that the Prince's letter had been in Perceval's possession *before* he made his speech, and prompted it. The Prince affected to be indignant at the disclosure.—"Buckingham Papers—The Regency," i. 231.

Sheridan was believed to have had a share in the composition of this famous letter.—Ward, "Diary," ii. 426.

administration of the public affairs. And we take the liberty of availing ourselves of your gracious permission to address to your Royal Highness in this form what has occurred to us in consequence of that communication.

"The Prince Regent, after expressing to your Royal Highness in that letter his sentiments on various public matters, has, in the concluding paragraph, condescended to intimate his wish 'that some of those persons with whom the early habits of his life were formed would strengthen his Royal Highness's hands, and constitute a part of his Government.' And his Royal Highness is pleased to add, 'that, with such support, aided by a vigorous and united administration, formed on the most liberal basis, he would look with additional confidence to the prosperous issue of the most arduous contest in which Great Britain was ever engaged.'

"On the other parts of his Royal Highness's letter we do not presume to offer any observations. But on the concluding paragraph, in so far as we may venture to suppose ourselves included in the gracious wish which it expresses, we owe it, in obedience and duty to your Royal Highness, to explain ourselves with frankness and sincerity.

"We beg leave most earnestly to assure your Royal Highness that no sacrifices, except those of honour and duty, could appear to us too great to be made for the purpose of healing the divisions of our country, and of uniting both its Government and its people. All personal exclusions we entirely disclaim. We rest on public measures; and it is on this ground alone that we must express, without reserve, the impossibility of our uniting with the present Government. Our differences of opinion are too many and too important to admit of such a union. His Royal Highness will, we are confident, do us the justice to remember that we have twice already acted on this impression—in 1809, on the proposition made to us under His Majesty's authority; and last year, when his Royal Highness was graciously pleased to require our advice respecting the formation of a new Government. The reasons which we then humbly submitted to him are strengthened by the increasing dangers of the times; nor has there, down to this moment, appeared even any approximation towards such an agreement of opinion on the public interests as can alone form a basis for the honourable union of parties previously opposed to each other.

"Into the details of these differences we are unwilling to enter. They embrace almost all the leading features of the present policy of the empire. But his Royal Highness has himself been pleased to advert to the late deliberations of Parliament

on the affairs of Ireland. This is a subject, above all others, important in itself, and connected with the most pressing dangers. Far from concurring in the sentiments which his Majesty's ministers have on that occasion so recently expressed, we entertain opinions directly opposite. We are firmly persuaded of the necessity of a total change in the present system of government in that country, and of the immediate repeal of those civil disabilities under which so large a portion of his Majesty's subjects still labour on account of their religious opinions. To recommend to Parliament this repeal is the first advice which it would be our duty to offer to his Royal Highness. Nor could we, even for the shortest time, make ourselves responsible for any further delay in the proposal of a measure without which we could entertain no hope of rendering our services useful to his Royal Highness or to our country.

"We have only, therefore, further to beg your Royal Highness to lay before the Prince Regent the expressions of our humble duty, and the sincere and respectful assurance of our earnest wishes for whatever may best promote the ease, honour, and advantage of his Royal Highness's Government, and the success of his endeavours for the public welfare.

"We have the honour, etc.

"GREY,
"GRENVILLE."

After much discussion, the Duke eagerly pressing them to accept, they persisted in their resolve.

The town was presently infinitely amused with the "Parody of a Celebrated Letter," full of wit and sarcasm, and soon known to be the work of the Prince's former *protégé*, Moore.

PARODY OF A CELEBRATED LETTER.

AT length, dearest Freddy, the moment is nigh,
When, with P—rc—v—l's leave, I may throw my chains by;
And, as time now is precious, the first thing I do,
Is to sit down and write a wise letter to you.

I meant before now to have sent you this Letter,
But Y—rm—th and I thought perhaps 'twould be better
To wait till the Irish affairs were decided—
That is, till both Houses had prosed and divided,
With all due appearance of thought and digestion—
For, though H—rtf—rd House had long settled the question,
I thought it but decent, between me and you,
That the two *other* Houses should settle it too.

I need not remind you how cursedly bad
Our affairs were all looking when Father went mad:
A strait waistcoat on him and restrictions on me,
A more *limited* Monarchy could not well be.

I thought the best way, as a dutiful son,
Was to do as Old Royalty's self would have done.
So I sent word to say I would keep the whole batch in
The same chest of tools, without cleansing or patching.
And think—only think—if our Father should find,
Upon graciously coming again to his mind,
That improvement had spoiled any favourite adviser—
That R—se had grown honest, or W—stm—rel—nd wiser;
That R—d—r was, e'en by one twinkle the brighter,
Or L—v—rp—l's speeches but half a pound lighter,
What a shock to his old royal heart it would be!
No!—far were such dreams of improvement from me:
And it pleased me to find at the house where, you know,
There's such good mutton cutlets and strong curaçoa,
That the Marchioness called me a duteous old boy,
And my Y—rm—th's red whiskers grew redder for joy!

You know, my dear Freddy, how oft, if I *would*,
By the law of last sessions I *might* have done good.
I *might* have told Ireland I pitied her lot,
Might have sooth'd her with hope—but you know I did not.
And my wish is, in truth, that the best of old fellows
Should not, on recovering, have cause to be jealous,
But find that, while he has been laid on the shelf,
We've been all of us nearly as mad as himself.

A new era's arrived—though you'd hardly believe it—
And all things, of course, must be new to receive it.
New villas, new fêtes (which e'en Waithman attends)—
New saddles, new helmets, and—why not *new friends?*

I repeat it, "New Friends"—for I cannot describe
The delight I am in with this P—rc—v—l tribe.
Such capering!—such vapouring!—such rigour!—such vigour!
North, south, east, and west, they have cut such a figure,
That soon they will bring the whole world round our ears,
And leave us no friends—but Old Nick and Algiers,
When I think of the glory they've beam'd on my chains,
'Tis enough quite to turn my illustrious brains!
It is true we are bankrupts in commerce and riches,
But think how we furnish our allies with breeches!
We've lost the warm hearts of the Irish, 'tis granted,
But then we've got Java, an island much wanted.

I am proud to declare I have no predilections,
My heart is a sieve, where some scatter'd affections
Are just danced about for a moment or two,
And the *finer* they are the more sure to run through:
Neither have I resentments, nor wish there should come ill
To mortal—except (now I think on't) Beau Br—mm—l,

Who threaten'd, last year, in a superfine passion,
To cut *me*, and bring the old King into fashion.
This is all I can lay to my conscience at present,
When such is my temper, so neutral, so pleasant,
So royally free from all troublesome feelings,
So little encumber'd by faith in my dealings.
When such are my merits (you know I hate cracking),
I hope, like the vendor of Best Patent Blacking,
"To meet with the generous and kind approbation
Of a candid, enlighten'd, and liberal nation."

By-the-by, ere I close this magnificent letter
(No man, except Pole, could have writ you a better),
'Twould please me if those, whom I've humbugged so long
With the notion (good men!) that I knew right from wrong,
Would a few of them join me—mind, only a few—
To let *too* much light in on me never would do;
But even Grey's brightness sha'n't make me afraid,
While I've C—md—n and Eld—n to fly to for shade;
So, in short, if they wish to have places, they may.
And I'll thank you to tell all these matters to Grey,
Who, I doubt not, will write (as there's no time to lose),
By the twopenny post to tell Grenville the news;
And now, dearest Fred (though I've no predilection),
Believe me yours always with truest affection.

P.S.—A copy of this is to P—rc—v—l going—
Good Lord! how St. Stephens will ring with his crowing!

The unhappy Prince, for such he was, all this time was in the hands of favourites, who, at Brookes's, were given the responsibility of the recent transaction. They were, says a member of that club, talking at Lord Yarmouth, and before his face wondering "who the vile spy can be who has poisoned the Regent's mind against his old friends, and this as loud as a trumpet; Manchester Square has in fact done the whole business, and some say a little of Windsor intermixed."*

The Hertford family were indeed held accountable for this step. "Not a day passed without his visiting Lady Hertford."† Her son and her husband had now both posts at Court. Mr. Canning was violent in his language against the two lords, and declared that they ought to have temporised, and would have later got rid of him. People were talking of "What portion of Castlereagh's and 'Doctor's' was to go into the work." It is unfortunate that in so many transactions there should be some charge of perfidy or want of good faith made against the Prince. In this instance he had actually given his promise to Lord Grey, that on the expiring

* "Buckingham's Memoirs—Regency," i. 241.
† Romilly, "Memoirs," ii.

of the restrictions he would call them to power. Lord Grey told Mr. Grey Bennett's brother, that "at an interview with Lords Grey and Grenville, he assured them that though he nominally retained his ministers, yet he secretly was inclined to them, and that he would give them all the support he could! The two noblemen made him a long speech on the unconstitutional character of the proposal, and declined coming to any such understanding. The Prince stared at them for some time, made no answer, and turned on his heel." To this Lord Grey alluded in a letter to Lord Moira.* "He had promised to do whenever the restrictions on his authority should cease." But, as was before urged, the Prince's canon of truth often rested on his humours and their changes.

As he departed, Lord Wellesley bequeathed to his master a new favourite, Dr. Knighton, his own physician, who was to rule him, even despotically, till his death. Of him we shall hear a great deal later on.

Before the end of the week, the town was to be engrossed by an extraordinary scene which had taken place at Carlton House, and was to turn the public more strongly against the Regent, who seemed to be floundering from one indiscretion to another. On Saturday, the 22nd, he gave a great dinner to the Duke and Duchess of York, at which were also present Lord Lauderdale, Sheridan, Erskine, and his daughter, the young and interesting Princess Charlotte. There were also present Lord Tyrconnel and Lord and Lady Keith, and the faithful Adam. After dinner and much wine, the Prince began to abuse the Whigs, saying they all hated him except three, Lord Erskine, Sheridan, and Ponsonby, with many slight expressions on Lords Grey and Grenville's conduct. This attack was made even before the servants had quitted the room.

Lord Lauderdale had, however, the spirit to rise, and in respectful terms addressed the Prince in vindication of his friends. The Prince uttered some further words of dislike, when the young Princess suddenly rose, in tears, and proceeded to leave the room, Sheridan leading her to the door! This singular scene was the talk of the town.

According to all precedent, as Mr. Ward remarked, she disliked her father's ministers and loved the Opposition. At the opera, that night, seeing Lord Grey, she kissed her hand and smiled very graciously on him.† She appeared delighted with the scene, and bowed to everyone. This waywardness, injudicious as it was, was natural, and was one of the attractions

* "Life and Opinions," p. 291.
† Ward, "Diary," ii. 432.

that drew the nation to her. This incident, however, was in everyone's mouth, and celebrated by the famous lines* of Lord Byron:

LINES TO A LADY WEEPING.

Weep, daughter of a royal line,
A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
Ah! happy if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away.

Weep, for thy tears are virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles;
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles.

March, 1812.

The Prince had fallen into a habit which excited the grave forebodings of his friends—viz. of abusing anyone he disliked in the most open way; and the Archbishop of York bewailed "his loud discourse to large companies about all sorts of persons and things." *The Morning Chronicle* had now turned sharply on him, and was attacking him bitterly. Lord Erskine declared that he would never set foot in Carlton House again, and there was also a coolness between him and Lord Lauderdale.

By March 19th the whole of the recent transactions were brought before the House of Lords on a question put by Lord Barrington, whether the famous letter was a genuine one? The excitement was intense, nearly the whole House appearing to be in the House of Lords. Below the bar there was an equally great crowd. The language on all sides was excited. The language on the Liberal side was certainly well pointed. Lord Darnley said that the ministers owed their places to "unavowed advisers, whose selfish and bigoted whispers in the royal ear endanger the state." He added that he had told the same truths to the Prince himself. Lord Grey used still plainer language. He virtually charged the Prince with having given promises to the Catholics, and with having broken those promises; but he spoke in the hearing of those who would contradict him if what he said was unfounded, and who would, he was sure, support its truth if questioned. In this he referred to Mr. Ponsonby, who was no doubt listening in the crowd, and who when appealed to in a later

* The verses are often quoted, but few recollect the strange scene which occasioned them. They were copied, repeated, and sent over the kingdom; and, for so short and simple a production, were surprisingly effectual in damaging the Regent.

debate confirmed it.* He then asked contemptuously, was it likely that he would join with the ministers, using the word "condescend," and passed to something yet more stinging "to his address." The cause of all this, he said, was one thing of which he should freely speak, beside which the ministry itself became an insignificant question—the unseen influence that lurked behind the throne, and which he called a disastrous and disgusting influence; a cursed one, and which prevented either public complaint or honest counsel from reaching his ears. Strong words, that must have made their ears tingle, and which were never forgotten or forgiven by the Prince. Indeed, both Houses rang with personal insults of this kind. Mr. Lyttleton in another debate alluded to the minions and favourites who surrounded the Regent, and declared that what was to reward those who spent their blood for their country was lavished on "Gavestons." But what galled him most, as Colonel Tyrwhitt told the Speaker, was Lord Donoughmore's later speech on the Catholic Question on March 21st.

His unpopularity was growing. With the crowds looking on in Pall Mall as he passed by on his way to the drawing-room there was not a single cheer; at Drury Lane allusions in the play to promises made by the Prince of Wales were taken up to thunders of applause, and at the Lyceum some mention of female influence was similarly greeted. Complimentary addresses to him all over the country were attempted, but the attempts failed. At the Royal Society dinner Lord Stafford received a message from him, to the effect that when the royal health was given he would say something about a new lustre he had presented to them, and his wish to have it altered if it did not suit; which was received in perfect silence. No wonder he began to lose heart, and declined the Lord Mayor's banquet, lest in his passage through the City he should be hissed. The *entourage* seemed quite cowed, and though Lord Donoughmore boldly published his speech, so offensive to the Court that it was confidently expected Lord Yarmouth's "red herrings" would have challenged Mr. Lyttleton, the whole was submitted to and accepted.

Never had a false step met so speedy and effectual a punishment. And that all was the work of "minions behind the

* "I say that the noble Duke [Bedford] lately at the head of the Irish Government and myself did receive commands, not merely permission, but the actual commands of the illustrious personage alluded to, to make the communication that such were the intentions of that great personage in respect to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and that he would never forsake their interests."

throne" operating on a weak nature was conclusively proved. He was present here to declare that the only one of the party that had "treated him like a gentleman" was the proscribed Lord Grenville; and he now proceeded to punish these enemies by drawing up a new list for the Carlton House *droit d'entrée*, from which he struck out all old-friend councillors, with a couple of exceptions.*

* "Buckingham's Memoirs," i. 289.

CHAPTER V.

1812.

While he was in this state, the whole country was startled and shocked to learn that on May 11th the Prime Minister had been assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons. This catastrophe was thus graphically described:

"On Monday, 11th May," says Mr. Grey Bennett, "I went down to the House of Commons, to attend the third reading of Mr. Banke's Sinecure Bill, which it was understood to be the intention of Mr. Perceval once more to oppose. I arrived at the House at a little before five, and found the House in a committee on the order. I sat down on the bench upon the floor, near to the spot where the witness stood, and a few minutes after I heard the report of a pistol, which appeared to come from the lobby. I said to Macdonald, who sat by me: 'Good God, someone has shot himself!' In a few seconds there was a stir in the gallery, and at the same time someone burst into the House and said: 'A member is shot!' and a moment afterwards Sir S. Vaughan rushed in and exclaimed: 'Mr. Perceval is shot.' Everyone then rose, there not being above forty members in the House. Mr. Barrington, who was in the chair, asked leave to report progress, and at the same time the Speaker entered the House, and took his chair. He ordered everyone to take his seat, which, after a minute or two of confusion, was obeyed. It was then announced that the assassin was secured, and it was proposed he should be brought through the House, to be lodged in one of the upper rooms until a magistrate should arrive. The prisoner was then brought to the bar, held by two messengers, and appeared haggard, his eyes staring, and evidently in the greatest agitation. It was then

proposed that the Speaker, to avoid a rush of members, all pressing at once, should name some to precede and others to follow the prisoner. He first named Mr. Whitbread, and among others he named me. I accordingly followed, and the prisoner was lodged in what is called the prison-room.

"Different witnesses deposed what had passed—that it was on entering the door of the lobby at the top of the stone-stairs that the pistol was fired; Mr. Perceval advanced in a wild manner—as if seeking for shelter—three or four steps, clapped his hand to his heart, and fell forwards, exclaiming: 'Murder,' or, 'Oh! I am murdered.'" He was caught before he fell by a Mr. Phillips of Manchester, and carried by him and by Mr. W. Smith (member for Norwich), into the room called the Secretary's room; he was set on a table, his feet resting on a chair. He appeared almost lifeless, seemed to suffer no pain, but after a sort of convulsive sob expired in about eight minutes after the wound had been given."

Following on this casualty came a flood of lampoons and libellous attacks. For a man so vain as the Regent was of his physical advantages, who was praised and flattered by sycophants, it must have been galling to read the stinging, bitter, perhaps truthful, attacks that were from time to time made upon him. These were characterised by a licence and personality that now seems almost incredible. Thus, in this year, there appeared in *The Examiner* one of the most savage diatribes, which in the case of a private person would have been punished severely. It was provoked, as Mr. Brougham, counsel for the Hunts, contended, by the sycophantic eulogies of the Court scribes, who were thus to a certain extent accountable; but the plea did not avail. This "libel," which appeared on March 22nd, was to this effect:

"What person unacquainted with the true state of the case, would imagine in reading these astounding eulogies that this *Glory of the People* was the subject of millions of stings and reproaches! That this *Protector of the Arts* had named a wretched foreigner his historical painter, in disparagement, or in ignorance of the merits of his countrymen! That this *Mæcenas of the age* patronised not a single deserving writer! That this *Breather of Eloquence* could not say a few decent extempore words, if we are to judge, at least, from what he said to his regiment on its embarkation for Portugal! That this *Conqueror of Hearts* was the disappointer of hopes! That this *Exciter of Desire* (Bravo, messieurs of the *Post*!), this *Adonis in Loveliness* was a corpulent gentleman of fifty! In short, that this *delightful*,

blissful, wise, *pleasurable, honourable, virtuous, true,* and *immortal* Prince was a violator of his word, a libertine, over head and ears in debt and disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, a companion of gamblers and demireps, a man who has just closed half a century without one single claim on the gratitude of his country or the respect of posterity!"

Lord Ellenborough dealt with the accused in the severest style in his partial charge, alluding strangely to the committal of adultery as "a misfortune." He sentenced the two brothers Hunt to a fine and term of imprisonment, during which they were visited by Lord Byron and others of their friends and supporters. "The Triumph of the Whale" appeared in the same journal, but escaped prosecution.

Here is a specimen of this light persiflage, written by Charles Lamb:

THE TRIUMPH OF THE WHALE.

Io! Pæan! Io! sing,
To the finny people's king!
Not a mightier whale than this,
In the vast Atlantic is;
Not a fatter fish than he,
Flounders round the Polar sea:
See his blubber at his gills,
What a world of drink he swills! . . .
Such his person—next declare,
Muse! who his companions are:
Every fish of generous kind,
Stands aside or slinks behind. . . .
Name or title, what has he?
Is he Regent of the sea?
By his bulk and by his size,
By his oily qualities,
This (or else my eyesight fails),
This should be the Prince of Whales.

There can be no doubt that this time the unpopularity of the Regent was excessive. Much of this was, of course, owing to his personal character and conduct, but more to the harsh severity of the department administered by Lord Sidmouth. During the last year of the Perceval ministry the number of prosecutions by the Government was enormous, and the system had been since kept up with unrelenting severity. No one was so sensitive to ridicule, and no one was so lampooned or assailed with such merciless wit and power—Moore, the Hunts, Charles Lamb, Cruikshank, Hone, kept up unceasing attacks. Moore's verses, turned with great neatness and full of "fun," gave infinite pleasure—

The table spread with tea and toast,
Death-warrants, and *The Morning Post.*

The political result of the minister's death was, of course, to dissolve his ministry. It was felt that his popularity with the squires and county gentry was its mainstay and support. At this crisis the Chancellor gathered the voices of his colleagues as to what was to be done. Some thought it "doubtful," others "dangerous." The Chancellor was timely convinced that Lord Wellesley and Canning would be glad to come in as they "were both sick of being out." Meanwhile, Lords Grey and Grenville looked on, the former in town, the latter at his country-seat, one at least being certain that an application must be made to them.

The result of the new deliberations was an application by Lord Liverpool to Lord Wellesley and Canning, on the principle that "his royal highness, being desirous of continuing his administration upon its present basis, was desirous of strengthening it as much as possible by associating to it such persons in public life as agreed most nearly and generally upon the principles upon which public affairs had been conducted." * This definition could not include the two persons whose opinions on the Catholic question were well known, and so the result proved.

"The day that Lord Liverpool's letter appeared in *The Times*, on the 20th May, says Mr. G. Bennett, a note was added to this effect, that a further continuance of this correspondence would appear on the morrow. When Lord Liverpool read this, he said: 'That is impossible, as there is no other letter.' However, on Thursday night, the 21st, between eight and nine at night, Lord Liverpool received an answer to his letter, and which appeared in *The Times* and *Chronicle* of the next day (the 22nd) —which papers are printed at six in the morning, so that the letter must have been sent to the press at the same time it was forwarded to Lord Liverpool. This provoked the ministers in general so much, that they determined, with the exception of Lord Melville (who said he could serve with Lord Wellesley, but never under him), that they never would belong to a Cabinet of which he was a member. Lord Liverpool is said (Lord Holland told me the story) to have remarked that it was not safe to be in the same room with him.

"In consequence of this and other failures to patch up a Government, Mr. Stuart Wortley, the great supporter of Mr. Perceval's administration, and the avowed enemy of all Whigs and Whiggism, gave notice of a motion on the 19th for the 21st, the object of which was to address the Prince to form an effective administration. Accordingly, on Thursday, the 21st, he, after a short speech, stating the necessity of a strong and efficient

* "Life and Letters of Lord Wellesley," where the whole correspondence and the account of the interviews are given.

government, moved an address to the above effect. None of the Opposition leaders spoke, and, after a rather dull debate, the House divided: 174 for the address—170 against it; leaving the Government in a minority of 4.

"Thereupon Mr. Stuart Wortley and Lord Milton waited on the Prince, whose reply was: 'I shall take into my serious and immediate consideration the address of the House of Commons.' Accordingly, the next day, the Regent sent for Lord Wellesley, and gave him instructions to form an administration. Lord W. waited on Lords Grey and Grenville, and proposed to them as points of agreement the question of the Catholics of Ireland, and the war in the Peninsula. To the first they gave their unqualified assent; to the second, they declared themselves as anxious as he could be to prosecute with vigour the war in the Peninsula; but they could not decide upon the extent, as they, not forming a part of an administration, could have no opinion as to the means possessed by the country to extend or continue the system.

"Lord Wellesley saw the Regent again, and gave him the answers of Lords Grey and Grenville. He is said to have affected to consider them as refusals to take office, and some debate was necessary to convince him of his error. Lord Wellesley, too, sent the same tests to the existing administration, who all declined, except Lord Melville, to have anything to do with it, and to forming a part of a Cabinet of which he was a member. Various manœuvres were then set on foot to separate Canning from Lord Wellesley; but all failed. Yet, even to this hour, the whole arrangement is as much afloat as ever, and yesterday even Mr. Sheridan said that no difficulty was overcome—people are at a loss to conceive where the hitch really is—all seem agreed in the opinion that no arrangement of places has even as yet been proposed; but it is suspected that the point in dispute is Hertford House, and the necessity of his giving up that favourite establishment of secret intrigue and influence, the existence of which no administration, meaning well, could admit of."

Thus the old backstair intrigues were in full work. It had been understood that the ministry was dissolved, and only temporarily held office; but people now heard of the Premier being closeted with the Regent, of midnight Cabinet Councils, of the Chancellor neglecting his legal duties and hurrying away from Court with the Duke of Cumberland, whilst Lady Bathurst told Lady Bessborough, with an air of affected regret at what she was imparting, "that the thing was afloat again, and that Lord Liverpool had been too hasty and intemperate." While the

fickle Prince, quite careless as to compromising his agents, was busy with his familiars, and on a new track.

His anonymous correspondent thus wrote to Lord Buckingham:

"4 o'clock P.M., May 26, 1812.

"About four yesterday, Lord Wellesley saw the Prince Regent, by the command of the latter. The Prince had an air of great gaiety and pleasantry, and affected great kindness towards Lord Wellesley. 'Well, Wellesley, I find you have totally failed with the ministry,' to which Lord Wellesley assented; 'and also,' continued the Prince, 'with Opposition.' 'There, sir,' said Lord Wellesley, 'I must beg to stop you. I could not fail where I had no authority to treat.'

"The Prince then continued thus in substance. That he had read over and well considered Lord Wellesley's project, communicated to him the evening before. That on one principle of it, namely, the immediately entering upon the consideration of the Catholic claims, he went the utmost length that Lord Wellesley had gone, or would wish to go, and that he would name no Administration, nor put his confidence in any which should not adopt that line of conduct. To which Lord Wellesley replied, that if that were his royal highness's determination, and that if it were fairly and honourably conducted, without trick or juggle towards the Catholics, that he, for one, would support any Administration formed on such a principle, so far as that point went; but he would not pledge himself either to take office with it, or give it his general support.

"The Prince then said, that as to making a proposition for a junction with Opposition, nothing should ever induce him to employ them. That he had no objection to one or two of them individually, but as a body, he would rather abdicate the Regency than ever come into contact with them. 'But,' added he, 'there will be no occasion for any such overture, for you will be happy to hear, my dear Wellesley, that the Chancellor has entirely come round to you upon the Catholic question; and, indeed, assures me that he was with you from the first.'

"I need not tell your lordship the astonishment, and (I believe) dismay, with which Lord Wellesley received this extraordinary piece of intelligence.

"'And,' continued the Prince, 'Melville, who was never violent against it, is also with you, and I have prevailed upon him to waive his personal repugnance to acting with you. I have seen the Chancellor and Liverpool this morning, and have rowed

them handsomely for their letter to you, which was a most unprovoked and unpardonable folly. And I have desired Liverpool to summon a Cabinet this night, when the whole subject will be considered over again. And then you know you can all meet together to-morrow, or next day, and choose your offices amongst one another.'

"As late as three this day, Lord Wellesley had heard nothing more, and, in fact, thinks the thing will go off, and that this infatuated man will risk himself and the country upon the present men."

The next incident was the introduction of Lord Moira on the scene, with whom the Regent had a reconciliation, "hanging upon his neck and weeping." He saw him for hours at a time, protesting that the only way to meet him was that "there should be a fixed determination that everything that had separated them should be forgotten." After some days of these endearments, the Prince tried to persuade him to see Lord Eldon, which the other declined. He then bewailed his hard case—that he could not bring round either of his two friends to his view. His nerves were beginning to fail him, and with other persons he was in "such a state of irritation that he could not be spoken to," so that Lord Liverpool in great alarm sent off an express to Oatlands for the Duke of York. The Prince's next extraordinary step was to be found closeted with "the Doctor," Lord Sidmouth, the man he disliked and had called "a blockhead" only a few weeks before. But the weaker mind often turns to what it most violently proscribed. The ministers were called out of their beds to go to Carlton House; in short, it was a season of the wildest and most ridiculous confusion, while the contempt and anger which pursued the irresolute Prince were unbounded. The House of Commons were growing impatient, and everyone clamoured for a solution.

Mr. Bennett has said that no one could make out exactly what the hitch was. We, however, can guess it. One of those dreadful fits of animosity which would take possession of him was at the bottom of it all. All this agitation was produced by resistance to the pressure put on him to send for the two lords and give them a direct commission.* He asked Lord Wellesley was he not shocked at "the grossness of female connections being dragged into politics;" on which the latter said bluntly that he took care that no woman should ever have anything to say to him on politics. He could not overcome his disgust at the nauseous draught until May 31st, when, at five o'clock, just as the puzzled

* See "Buckingham—Regency," *passim*, pp. 308, 337.

Wellesley was going out of town, "to remain," Lord Moira arrived at Apsley House with the news that he had prevailed on the Duke of York to go to the Prince on the subject of his "twenty-seven years' animosity" to Lord Grey; and the Duke had undertaken the task very willingly. A strange heated interview followed (at which Lord Moira was present), and much ill-blood between the brothers. But it ended by the Prince declaring that he must have an explanation, and a satisfactory one, of the words Lord Grey had used in his speech, where he had virtually charged the Prince with breaking his promises. In a manly way, and without retraction, Lord Grey virtually re-stated what he had said, adding that if the Prince felt a strong personal objection to him, he was quite ready to stand out of the way.*

Lord Moira affected to think this quite satisfactory, and declared that a preliminary obstacle to the negotiation was removed. On the next day, January 1st, it became known that at last Lord Wellesley had been empowered to make a direct offer to the two lords. So far we think we have held in our hand the clue of this most perplexing game.

* "Life of Lord Grey," p. 294.

CHAPTER VI.

1812.

Lord Wellesley, being thus once more introduced on the stage, was ordered to form an administration with *carte blanche*, being specially authorised to communicate with Lords Grey and Grenville.* His most brilliant hopes might now fairly be kindled. Once more he was to fail. But an accurate observer shall tell the story:

"Mr. Wortley," says Mr. G. Bennett, "then rose and said, that in consequence of the various rumours and reports that were abroad, and the positive assertions on one side and the other in all the papers, he wished to ask Mr. Ponsonby, and he had accordingly written the question down—'Whether he or his friends had received any offer or proposal for office, which they had refused on personal or public grounds.' Mr. Ponsonby replied that, 'no offer had been made of any sort, so there could be no refusal." These questions were settled with Ponsonby in the morning, Wortley having called upon him, and it was felt necessary to do something from the lies that were in circulation, as even in the daily papers, in *The Morning Herald*, *The Carlton House Gazette*, it was stated that four seats had been offered in the Cabinet to the Whigs, which they had refused, wanting all; and that it was time for the public, nay, the Privy Council, to interfere, to check this overweening and overbearing aristocracy.

"*June 3rd.*—When the House of Commons met, Mr. Canning

* The minute of Wellesley's interview with Lord Grey, "Buckingham Papers—The Regency," p. 330.

rose and stated that he was desired by Lord Wellesley to make known that, as it had been told to the House that he had been commissioned by the Regent to form an administration, he thought it fit that it should be known that he had resigned that morning all those powers into the hands of the Regent. Mr. Martin, whose motion to follow up the address moved by Mr. Wortley, stood for that day, postponed it *sine die*.

"My brother Ossulston told me" (goes on the diarist) "that Lord Grey had shown him the copy of the original proposals, which were as follows: Lord Wellesley to be First Minister, Lords Grey and Granville to name two besides themselves; the Regent named Lords Moira and Erskine. The Cabinet to consist of twelve; if of thirteen they were to name three, so that the Wellesleys were to have five in one case and six in the other. They were also to name the Chancellor, and during the time Lord Wellesley was with Lord Grey, Canning called upon Grant, the Master of the Rolls, to offer him the seals, not consulting Lords Grey and Grenville. Besides this the Regent reserved to himself the power of naming three persons to the offices he thought fit they should hold. When Lord Wellesley took the propositions to Lord Grey, he told him that as Lord Grenville was out of town he declined giving an answer, but that he thought it candid to inform him that they could not be accepted by him, and that he felt disposed, were it not from that circumstance, to give them his direct negative. All this took place on Monday, the first day that any communication was made to the Opposition. Lord Erskine told me this morning that the whole difference was form. His idea of that word must be odd, as so unwarrantable a proposition never was made. Lord Erskine sided with Opposition in their refusal to accept such terms; and it is said, finding that he was not to be Chancellor but Privy Seal, he exclaimed: 'By God! I suppose I am to sit in the Cabinet as Commissioner of Bankrupts!' Lady Jersey told Ossulston, that she overheard a conversation last night at Mrs. Boham's ball, between the Duke of Cambridge and the Dowager Duchess of Rutland. 'So, sir,' says the Duchess, 'I hear we are to be without the Talents. It is all over with them; thank God for it.' 'Thank God for it,' replies the Duke, 'but they keep so close together.' 'Yes, sir,' rejoins the Duchess, 'they are so fond of place—it is all to get office.' 'There can be no doubt of that,' says the Duke, 'but then they stick so damnably close to each other."

The two lords after a short deliberation had declined the scheme, on the ground that a "principle of disunion and jealousy" was introduced, "a supposed balance of contending

interest in a Cabinet so measured out by preceding stipulation," the result being only disunion and weakness. On the 3rd of June they sent an answer, declining.* There was much bitterness and even fury on this rejection, as the Regent and his party now thought they had had a very liberal allowance in the Cabinet; and it certainly seemed that with Lord Moira, Erskine, with Canning added to the five Grenvillites, would give them a majority. Lord Wellesley, too, held this view. Mr. Canning later pronounced this "generous and even rash." He also told his secretary that the real objection was that the Regent had named the first minister and not left it to the party to do.† Hence they knew that they would still have to contend with the Prince, his *camarilla*, and his minister. Lord Moira entreated them to reconsider the matter, pleading that all the members of the Cabinet were to be subject to the two lords' approbation.

It must be owned that this seemed reasonable. The letter was written in almost affectionate terms. But the two lords were inflexible, and Lord Grey, while acknowledging the goodwill, still declined. So that, on June 3rd, Lord Wellesley had announced his new failure to the Prince, and his commission was once more announced to be at an end. Lord Grey, however, gives the true reason in a private letter to Lord Moira, not given in the officially published series.

"It is my deliberate conviction that till the Prince shall see, that to render our services useful to himself it is necessary that he should give us full powers in making the arrangements in every part of the Government, in the same manner as he professed to do in the spring of 1811, and as he promised to do whenever the restrictions on his authority should cease; in short, till he is prepared to give us his full confidence both as to men and measures, it certainly is not desirable for us, and perhaps not for him, that we should be called to his councils."

These prognostications proved to be right, as on the same day Lord Moira wrote to propose a conference, "as being honoured with his Royal Highness's confidence, to remove misunderstanding. Should the issue of the convention be favourable, his object would be to solicit the Prince Regent's permission to address them personally." This proposal, carried by the Duke of Bedford, was coldly met by Lords Grey and Grenville.

"Motives of obvious delicacy stand in the way. We shall always receive with dutiful submission his Royal Highness's commands, in whatever channel he may be pleased to signify them; but we cannot venture to suggest to his Royal Highness,

* The correspondence is given in "Lord Wellesley's Life," iii. 261.
† Stapleton, "Life of Canning," p. 201.

through any other person, our opinions on points in which his royal highness is not pleased to require our advice."

"Ample testimonies were borne to Lord Moira's character," resumes our diarist, "and his disposition to reconcile all differences, but no new overture had been made. Taylor told me that the difficulty was with the Regent to admit Lord Grey into the Cabinet, and when that was got over all was thought settled. Lord Forbes told me last night that his uncle, Lord Moira, was by at the time Lord Wellesley had some words with the Regent, and said that 'he would not form a part of any administration.' We shall see how he kept his word.

"*June 5th.*—No new proposal, nor, indeed, a renewal of the old ones, was made this day to Lords Grey and Grenville. In the House of Commons, after some conversation, it was agreed to adjourn over to Monday, and, if no administration was then appointed, General Gascoigne pledged himself to propose some resolution to the House. In the Lords, Lord Moira began the discussion by stating that the expressions used by Lord Wellesley on Wednesday, that dreadful animosities existed, had been mischievously applied to the Regent. Now he solemnly denied that they existed, and that he, though the humble instrument of the negotiation, could state that upon his own knowledge. He repeated that all the delay had proceeded from a misapprehension, and he denied that the Regent had named anyone to any office, but the whole was left free to future arrangement. Lord Grey said it was impossible to have any doubt that persons and offices were named and filled up, and that to prove his assertion he read the terms as they came from Lord Wellesley, in which it appeared that Lord Wellesley was named First Commissioner of the Treasury, and Lord Moira, Erskine, and Canning, designated a part of the Cabinet. Lord Moira re-asserted that the whole was a misapprehension, and that yet his hopes were not wholly extinct of coming to an amicable adjustment. In the midst of all these serious things, the only joke I have heard of it was from Sheridan, who said to me the other night, that two trades were lost in this town, viz. cabinet-makers and joiners.

"On Friday night, after the debate, a letter was written to the Duke of Bedford, praying him to mediate between Lords Grey, Grenville, and Moira; and Whitbread was sent for to town. On Saturday Lord Moira notified to them that he had full powers to form an administration. Accordingly, Lords Grey and Grenville met Lord Moira and Lord Erskine, and Lord Moira stated he had powers to concede the Catholic claims, the Orders of Council, economical reforms, and all other reforms; even, if thought

necessary, reform in Parliament. Lord Grey then said that before they went farther as to the discussion of offices to be held by different persons, he thought it necessary to ask what was intended to be done in respect to the officers of the household. Lord Moira said that he had full powers to remove them, as well as any other officers of state, but that he personally should consider such an act as highly injurious to the public service.

"To this Lord Grey and Lord Grenville replied, they also acted on public grounds alone, and with no other feeling whatever than that which arose from the necessity of giving to a new Government that character of efficiency and stability, and those marks of the constitutional support of the Crown which were required to enable it to act usefully for the public service; and that on these grounds it appeared to them indispensable that the connection of the great offices of the Court with the political administration should be clearly established in its first arrangements."

"A decided difference of opinion as to this point having been thus expressed on both sides, the conversation ended here with mutual declarations of regret.

"Nothing was said on the subject of official arrangements, nor any persons proposed on either side, to fill any particular situation."

Such was the conclusion of the comedy. The behaviour of the two lords has often been discussed, and on the record, as it were, they would seem to have been grasping. But it must not be forgotten that they were only to form a portion of the ministry, and that the Prince's agent was to be the head. And they knew enough of what *tracasseries* were certain to follow.*

"Yet there are some people still who doubt the discretion and judgment with which the negotiation was carried on between Lords Grey, Grenville, and Moira. Whitbread, for instance, is decidedly of opinion that the whole matter was sadly mismanaged, and that supposing Lord Moira's intentions to have been sincere they might have carried their point, and the honour of all parties been saved. He says, for example, when Lord Moira told them that he had power to remove all the officers of the household, he should have said: Pass over to your other powers and we will talk of that afterwards. Then, having settled the great questions

* Mr. Grenville wrote: "As long ago as Sunday se'nnight, Lord Hertford told old Sloane that he would insure to him the continuance of the old Government; and early on Sunday, a great prelate, a friend of mine, remarking to the Duke of Cumberland that Moira was said to have completed his Government, was answered: 'Do not be such a fool as to believe him—it is to be the old Government again.'"—"Regency," p. 369.

of reform, Orders of Council, Catholics, etc. he would have said: Now change 'I have power' into 'we have power,' and then let us look at the question. 1st. The Duke of Montrose, Lord Jocelyn, and Lord Cholmondeley; the Regent can have no wish to keep them, and we require their sacrifice to show that we have the power. Then Lords Hertford and Yarmouth. Now, as all men have weaknesses, and are to be led and managed through them, though we have the power to remove those officers we will not exercise it, but this must be known to be an act of our choice and not of necessity or compulsion; for if by removing Lord Hertford, etc. you could destroy his influence and annihilate his power, there could be no doubt it would be a wise step; but so far from it, you would only make that power be used more vehemently against yourself, you would sharpen all the existing animosities; whereas if they held office they would be disarmed, or, at least, have not such immediate interest in overthrowing you. I very much concur in all this, which Whitbread stated to me the other evening, and I am disposed to think that however honourable and praiseworthy and pure the motives of Lords Grey and Grenville were, they were not wise in the management of the transaction; for what are these offices in comparison with the good an entire change of measures would have effected? The whole question is, was the Regent sincere, and did he send Lord Moira with a disposition to form an administration; if he was we have acted unwisely, if not, the sooner we were out of the scrape the better."

"*June* 11*th*.—We had a long debate in the Commons upon the motion of Mr. Wortley to pray the Regent to continue his exertions to form a strong administration. The debate was dull and heavy, and the defence of Lords Grey and Grenville in no way made clearly out. The truth of the whole appears to be that the Regent hated them and they distrusted him, and that there was no likelihood of their agreeing together. Among the singularities of the night, Lord Yarmouth declared that he and the other members of the household thought they ought not to retain their offices; all they requested was to know ten minutes before certain gentlemen received the seals that they might resign. He said he had requested Mr. Sheridan to make known to his friends their determination, and that he has advised them not to resign, for that would degrade the Prince. To that statement Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Tierney replied, and denied that they or their friends had received from Mr. Sheridan the smallest information on the subject, and Mr. Tierney states that he, on Friday, had mentioned to Mr. Sheridan some reports that he had heard of the fact, and that Lord

Robert Seymour had stated that Lord Hertford would resign the moment it was settled the Opposition were to be in office, and asked him if he knew anything about it. Sheridan replied: 'I will bet you 500 guineas to 1 no such thing was ever in contemplation.' Mr. Canning stated that the interval of ten days which had elapsed between the unauthorised offer of Lord Wellesley to Lords Grey and Grenville, and when the Regent gave him full powers, was employed in endeavouring to induce the present administration to connect themselves with Lord Wellesley; he said besides, that Lord Moira told him, five minutes after he came out of the closet, that immediately upon the breaking off of the negotiation, he (Lord Moira) had gone to the Regent, and that the Prince had said: 'Well, Moira, do you bring me an administration?' To which Lord Moira replied: 'Before I answer that, I wish to know, Is your royal highness prepared upon my advice to part with all your household?' The answer was: 'I am.' 'Then, sir,' said Lord Moira, 'not one of them shall be moved.' He further added that Lord Moira did not advise the return of the present administration, nor did Mr. Canning say one word upon the attempt and failure of Lord Moira to form an administration on Monday, prior to Lord Moira giving back into the Regent's hands his commission: what that broke off upon is not yet known. Sheridan was always at Carlton House, where Lord Yarmouth said it was no secret, but universally known—his conduct deserves another name—as it must have been something worse than baseness to have suffered his friends to have raised a question on which he knew the whole negotiation must break off, when he had a knowledge of a fact, which, if told, would have prevented the proposition being made.

"*June* 13*th*.—Last night at Brookes's, Sheridan entered into his defence before an audience certainly not favourable to him. He denies that Lord Yarmouth ever commissioned him to tell his friends, and added that if he had he should have told him that he was not upon such terms of intimacy with Lords Grey and Grenville and Mr. Ponsonby, as to warrant that liberty. Lord Kinnaird put him in mind of his speech to him on the Wednesday before, 'that he thought the Regent ought not to give up his household, and that he was sure and knew he would not.' It may be asked then, under these circumstances, as he knew also that his friends made that a *sine quâ non*, and knew well that the household would resign, why he did not step forward as a common friend to tell them there was no occasion to agitate the question, for the cause would not arise that would require it. Yet Whitbread told me that Lord Moira told him that Sheridan had been working night and day for weeks to remove the impressions that existed

in the Regent's mind against Grey, pressing that he should be Prime Minister.

"As to the strange events of Monday, and Lord Moira's attempt to form an administration alone, Whitbread said that he believed that Moira took Canning with him to Carlton House on Monday to kiss hands as Secretary of State; and on going into the closet, the Regent said: 'Have you made an administration?' 'I am making one,' was the answer. 'Then,' said the Regent, 'the country requires an immediate Government, and I shall retain the present people in their places.' Lord Moira bowed and retired. Canning was not admitted, Lord Moira telling him that all was over, and that there was no use in his seeing the Regent.

"Sheridan tried to vindicate himself in this debate, but the question still remained unanswered: 'You knew of the intention of the household to resign, why did you conceal it?' This whole speech was most doting, and showed hardly any remains of what he was—he forgot all facts, and made such an exhibition that it would have been cruel to have pressed him hard, which neither Tierney nor Ponsonby did. Tierney told me that he thinks him quite gone; that once during his speech his jaw became locked, so that he could not utter. I never witnessed a sight more distressing. I have no doubt he will never speak again. Brougham, however, told me last night, the 21st, that he dined with Sheridan at Whitbread's, and that, upon a review of the case, it really was evident that he had not been as bad and as treacherous as before suspected. He saw a correspondence between Lord Yarmouth and Sheridan, in which Lord Yarmouth states that he bears a willing testimony to the truth of all the facts that Sheridan stated, and that satisfied Brougham as to the truth of the case, who said that after all there was nothing against Sheridan but the guilt of one of those lies he was so subject to tell. Whitbread was satisfied as to his conduct."

It is a contribution to the history of favourites to see what was the fate of the tools and instruments who had laboured so earnestly in this intricate business. Sheridan, who had atoned for his feeble effort to perform what was right by sacrificing his reputation on the household question, was afterwards left to shift for himself. Lord Moira, over whom the Regent had wept, was dismissed in disgrace. "After he had accepted the Garter," says Mr. Moore, "and the present Ministers secured their places, there was a drawing-room at which the whole house of Moira was; the Prince went about inviting company to Carlton House that evening, but never asked anyone of that family; which, considering all the tears he shed at the reconciliation, might have been expected as a thing of course. On the Friday,

Lord M. went to the levee, and was installed. The next day the Prince had a great dinner of what he called friends, to which Lord M. was not invited."

Now for the finale of one of the most singular political intrigues in modern politics:

"Adam," wrote Mr. Grenville, "has just announced to my brother the Prince's desire to see him and Lord Grey on Sunday morning; and has privately communicated to them, by the Prince's desire, his intention of continuing the present Ministers. It is received by Lord Grenville as final, but must not be indiscreetly mentioned till after the formal audience on Sunday. Rejoice with me, my dearest brother, at this providential escape."

Poor Lord Wellesley had to drink the last drop of his humiliation. Lords Grey and Grenville's final answer had been put into his hand just as he was setting out for Carlton House. There was a difficulty started in it—or rather a question—which he could have disposed of by a few words of explanation. Such was his delusion; but it was to be seen that they understood the situation better than he did. When he reached Carlton House, it seemed to him that the Prince already knew the purport of the answer; and when he read it, he said: "By G—d, Wellesley, I see they will not act, and, as the other fellows have refused, on personal grounds, it is impossible for you to arrange this matter, and I have resolved to put it into Moira's hands, who is not committed with either party." He added, he was sure that he would support Lord Moira.

This poor dupe, inexpressibly mortified at the part he had been made to play, could only say that he was sure that Lord Moira would never ask him to serve under him. To make his situation more mortifying, it was he that, after two days' labour, had brought about the maudlin reconciliation between the Prince and his old friend, when they had fallen "on each other's necks." Lord Moira, who was at Carlton House at the time, seemed himself much distressed at his sudden elevation and the mission imposed on him, and followed Lord Wellesley downstairs, protesting that he was quite unfit for the office, and that he would positively resign it to the other at the end of the year. Lord Wellesley, however, left town next day.

Mr. Tierney assured Lord Wellesley afterward that the Grenville party held back because they doubted the Prince's sincerity to Lord Wellesley. Macmahon and others of the Prince's party declared that the Prince "meant fairly." But he was the dupe of the *camarilla* at Beaufort House, who persuaded him—what would seem to have been the truth—that Lord Wellesley had no following, and could not help him.

When Lord Moira had also failed, Lords Yarmouth and Tyrwhitt came by night to Lord Wellesley to ask him would he go to Ireland "at the Regent's request." But he was no longer to be played with, and declined bluntly to entertain any private messages of the kind. If the offer was made in an open proper manner he would consider and answer it in the same spirit.

It becomes more and more evident, as we consider these transactions, that the Regent, while all through beguiling his "old friends" by illusive offers, was sagacious enough to see that the Government that would be most secure and least troublesome to him was the one to which his own sympathies tended; one formed of steady united men, that would command confidence in the country, and not of the heterogeneous distracted band who then made the Liberal party. In this he forecasted truly. For here was the inauguration of the long-lived Liverpool Ministry.

CHAPTER VII.

1812—1813.

Turning aside from politics we shall now glance at a most interesting household—also looked on by the Regent as a hostile camp—that of the amiable, engaging, and spirited young Princess Charlotte, now blooming into a handsome young girl.

It was wonderful indeed how her spirit had not been crushed or depressed by the cold and despotic supervision she had to endure from the grim Queen, her harsh father, her uncertain mother, and severe preceptors. But that warmth of temper which in her childhood had given her aunt cause for anxiety, had developed into an impetuosity—perhaps wilfulness—which redeemed her character from insipidity. There was a danger that this, worked upon by foolish designing persons, might lead her into difficulties. Her father ventured to be prophetic on the danger of these imperfections developing, and declared to Princess Lieven, who repeated it to Lord Houghton, that "it was fortunate for the country that she died, as she would have made a very bad queen;" a forecast refuted by her behaviour during her short married life. Political ardour in one so young had been early fostered in her by the Prince having her carefully instructed in true Whig principles by Mr. Adam; and when her health was drunk at the Pavilion, thus acknowledged the toast:

"I have made it my care to instil into the mind and heart of my daughter the knowledge and love of the true principles of the British Constitution; and I have pointed out to her young understanding, as a model for study, the political conduct of my most revered and lamented friend, Mr. Fox, who has asserted and maintained with such transcendent force the just principles upon

which the government under this excellent constitution ought to be administered, for the true and solid dignity of the crown, and the real security, freedom, and happiness of the people." He ended his speech by expressing his confidence "that the Princess would fulfil all the duties which she might be called upon to discharge when his bones were laid in the grave!" This declaration he of course contrived to reconcile with his own Tory principles, after his favourite convenient fashion.

The young Princess, who had much of what is called "the tomboy" in her nature, took a friendly interest in a young Westminster lad, young Keppel, later Lord Albemarle, who still survives, full of years. He relates some charming natural traits of his playmate. She would intercede with the head of the school for him, write him grave admonitory letters, and, once prevailing on him to mount a horse, gave the animal a lash from a cutting whip which set him off at full speed, to the great scandal of the assembled Court.

An agreeable letter of hers, hitherto unpublished, shows her thoughtfulness and good spirits. It appears to be addressed to some *protégé*, possibly Willy Austin.

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE TO ———.

"My dear William,

"You will be sorry to hear that poor Miss Sandon has been very unwell, but you will at the same time be glad to hear also that she is better, but not quite well enough to answer your letter herself.

"I hope you will find the biscuits good.

"Little John acted Tom Thumb, and acted the part of Tom Thumb himself at his aunt's house. He performed so well that Lady Charlotte thinks he will amuse you all to act some plays at Christmas, either at her house or at Blackheath.

"I thank you for your kind letter and am happy to hear that you are so well and comfortable; and believe me,

"Your most sincere Friend,

"C. P.

"The ladies all send their love, and myself the same."

The young Princess now took up her mother's cause with vehemence. Her father, it was said, was jealous of her to a degree of insanity. And another curious motive seems to have been used to inflame her against him: that he was being persuaded by the Duke of Cumberland and Lord Yarmouth that he might obtain a divorce, and, by marrying again, secure the

chance of a male heir to his throne. The young Princess therefore felt how much "she was in the same boat with her mother." This natural deduction was no doubt artfully pressed upon her. It clearly shows into what a network of intrigues we are entering: father arrayed against mother and daughter; the father eager to be rid of the daughter, yet using her as an instrument to "spite" her mother—intriguers and counsellors on both sides whetting and inflaming these animosities.

These family altercations soon led to action, and in the last week of September the Princess of Wales drove down to Windsor and asked to see her child. It may be conceived the flutter and consternation that this visit produced. But she was denied, and it is added that an interview took place between the Queen and her daughter-in-law, in which the latter announced that she would bring the question before the public. The Queen behaved temperately, and pointed out to her that the authority and discretion in the matter was with the Regent. But the angry mother was not to be thus pacified. The pariah-like view taken of her as a tainted and corrupting personage inflamed her to madness. Her doubtful friend, Lady C. Campbell, tells us "that in consequence of the Princess having gone to Windsor to see her daughter, a message was sent to her from the Regent by Lord Liverpool, to desire her not to go there again. Her reply was that, if she saw the Princess Charlotte as usual, once a-week, she would obey; but if not, she thought her duty in respect to her child was paramount to all others. The Princess Charlotte has not come to her, and the Princess of Wales is determined to go again to Windsor. Her royal highness knows she will be refused seeing her daughter, but wishes to have the refusal in black and white; and also to be able to say that she did all in her power to prove her love for Princess Charlotte."

This scene may be considered the starting-point for hostilities, and led to all the scandals of the succeeding years. Yet it was difficult to say what could be done or how the crisis could be avoided. It was impossible to allow such a mother and such a daughter to be in unrestricted communication without fatal results to the latter, even on the ground mentioned in one of the accounts by the Princess Charlotte of her mother's behaviour in her presence.

In this state of things, and after many consultations with Mr. Brougham, it was determined to send to the Queen a very sensible letter which the Princess of Wales had written in her own characteristic style—though a portion was the work of Brougham, who, as he says, made the whole "safe and sure"—claiming to be allowed full and proper access to her daughter,

and complaining of her education being interrupted, and of her being kept in close confinement. This, the first attack, produced dismay and fury at Carlton House. The Duke of Kent bluntly "thanked his stars that he hadn't to answer it." The Queen had to do so, and, according to Mr. Brougham, wrote an answer "full of lies and evasions."*

Meanwhile it was determined to take prompt measures to subdue the young Princess, whose flippant speeches to her father were being repeated. She had given the Queen the nickname of "The Merry Wife of Windsor," for which she had been reprimanded. "Don't you know," he said, "my mother is the Queen of England?" "And *you* seem to forget that *my* mother is Princess of Wales;" a retort which must have rankled in his mind. It was determined that she should be under his immediate control, and as a first step it was secretly determined to get rid of the governess to whom she was attached, and who was supposed to favour her young charge and her mother too much. Yet this idea was unfounded.

* Brougham, "Autobiography," p. 170.

CHAPTER VIII.

1813.

At the opening of Parliament the Regent found occasion for a grand display of all his love of pomp and magnificence. The pageant was unusually striking—the state procession and the show of uniforms. But the chief attraction was the interesting young Princess, who, seated near her father, could not restrain her delight and gaiety. "It was remarked," says an observer, "that she talked and laughed much, turned her back often upon papa, and had a certain expressive smile during the speech, which did not displease all the lords, nor all the ladies there. The Prince, it is said, was much displeased at her manner; in addition to which, the Princess Charlotte spoke to Lord Erskine, and nodded to Lord Jersey. His royal highness was flurried, but read his speech well—a pretty speech it was. He was received with dead silence, and not a hat raised or mark of disapprobation even; only a few plaudits as he went through the Horse Guards."

His daughter's levity was perhaps exaggerated, but the talking to Lord Erskine, whom the Prince had "cut," was characteristic. The opportunity for revolt was soon found, when a rumour reached her that the old Duchess of Leeds* was to succeed Lady de Clifford in authority over her.

Almost on the eve of her birthday, when she would be seventeen, the Regent must have been confounded to learn from Lord Liverpool that the young Princess had written to him to announce that, as her late governess had resigned, she was now old enough

* This lady later became Countess Flahault and Baroness Keith. She was granddaughter of Mrs. Thrale, and survived until lately.

to do without another, requiring an establishment with her own ladies-in-waiting. Like some young heroine she wrote off delighted letters to her mother, detailing what battles she had had with the Queen and aunts. She was said to have been encouraged in this step by Miss Mercer Elphinstone, who, according to Miss Knight, was set on by Lord Erskine.

One morning there arrived at Windsor the Regent himself, accompanied by the Lord Chancellor. The young Princess was sent for, in presence of the Queen, her aunt, and governess. Her father addressed her in angry tones, asking "What she meant by refusing to have a governess? As long as I live, you shall have no establishment unless you marry." She gaily referred him to her letter, on which "the Queen and he abused her as an obstinate, perverse, and wilful girl."

The Chancellor in a very rough way explained to her the law of the country as to his rights, and the Princess putting it to him as a father what he would do, he answered that if the Princess had been his child he would have locked her up. The high-spirited young creature thus baited, conducted herself with much dignity, and did not answer, but withdrew to the room of one of her aunts, when, bursting into tears, she exclaimed: "What would the King say if he could know that his granddaughter had been compared to the granddaughter of a collier?"

After this scene it was felt it would not do to push her into open rebellion. A concession was made; she was to have a governess only in name—the Duchess of Leeds—and two ladies, one of whom was the well-known Miss Knight, the chief mover in this business.

There was great dismay on the evening of the 14th of January at Montague House, the residence of the Princess of Wales, when a messenger arrived with the news that her daughter had submitted. This was a defeat for her. On the instant the well-known letter to the Prince was despatched to Lord Liverpool. This document, and the step of addressing such a document, had been carefully considered by their adviser, who had written it. At a special interview he solemnly asked her to consider the consequences. He warned her that the old scrutiny of her conduct would be revived, and bade her "prove herself" as to how she could encounter it.

On the 14th two copies were sent to Fife House; one sealed, for the Regent; the other open, for the benefit of Lords Liverpool and Eldon. The sealed letter was returned and sent back many times, but was finally received.

Meanwhile the young Princess had been sent to Windsor, and had been allowed to come into Warwick House, for a ball at

Carlton House, and for her birthday. But she had caught a cold at the ball, which she did not shake off, and she was allowed to remain in town. It was while she was at Warwick House that her mother sent to beg that she might be allowed to visit her. The minister gave his consent, and informed her that her daughter was to come and see her on the 11th. Now this seems a certain act of grace, and an advance at least, and it probably occurred to the Princess's party that the advantage they hoped from the letter might be lost. It was determined to give it to the public. "They are frightened to death," said Mr. Brougham, "I know; for Lord Moira has been sent to Whitbread to tell him that the Regent being afraid he may have been led into error respecting the Princess, wished to submit some papers to him. This message, by-the-bye, came from Sheridan, who came from Lord Moira. Mr. Whitbread said he could not then stay in town to read papers, but that he should return in a few weeks." "It is a singular fact," says Mr. Grey Bennett, "that in all this Princess of Wales business, its notoriety and publicity depended upon one vote out of three. Brougham and Whitbread differed last year as to the publication of the first letter—Brougham for, Whitbread against—Creevey was sent for, and reading the note while dining at Taylor's, wrote with a pencil, 'Publish:' and the first letter appeared in the next day's paper."

In this well-known and skilfully drawn-up paper she argued how patiently she had waited, and how day by day the restrictions on seeing her daughter were increased. "Our intercourse has been gradually diminished — a single interview weekly seemed sufficiently hard allowance for a mother's affections; that, however, was reduced to our meeting once a fortnight, and I now learn, that even this most rigorous interdiction is to be still more rigidly enforced. Then let me implore you to reflect on the situation in which I am placed, without the shadow of a charge against me—without even an accuser—after an inquiry that led to my ample vindication, yet treated as if I were still more culpable than the perjuries of my suborned traducers represented me, holding me up to the world as a mother who may not enjoy the society of her only child."

She reminded him that their daughter had never been confirmed—an odd suggestion for her—and wound up with a humble and touching appeal. The result was extraordinary. "I recollect," says Mr. Brougham, "no instance of such effects being produced by any statement of a case of appeal to the public against a grievance. The suddenness of the proceeding, the plain and simple nature of her complaint on a subject by which

the domestic feelings of all were affected, no doubt contributed to the effect produced."

The whole country became at once parties to the quarrel, and the spectacle of a mother harshly separated from her daughter came home to every household. The step, however, was a fatal mistake. She was, moreover, within a few days to learn that the opposite party could also appeal, under far more favourable conditions.

THE PRINCE REGENT TO LORD ELDON.

"C. H. ½ pt. 7 P.M.
"Feb. 10th, 1813.

"My dear Friend,

"Pray give me a call in your way home, when your Cabinet breaks up, as an idea has struck me which I wish to talk over with you for five minutes, in order that you may turn it over in your mind before to-morrow morning. Just send me a line, to mention about what hour I may be likely to see you, in order that I may be in the way and not keep you waiting.

"Ever sincerely yours,
"George P. R."

This boded her no good. Presently rumours came to her ear that the matter had been placed in the hands of the Privy Council, who were to decide the unpleasant issue whether she was fit to have the charge of the heiress to the Crown. Nor was this surprising. She had given public challenge, and here it was taken up and referred to an impartial body—his Council—for examination. But the prejudiced Speaker tells us what the papers were that were submitted to this conclave, viz. the materials used in "The Book," the Minutes of the Cabinet, and a new one, made in 1809. There were also the opinions of Messrs. Adam, Jekyll, and Garrow, the Prince's law officers, "that the evidence was such as could go to a jury." But the most extraordinary part of the transaction was this. It was necessary to have something to cover the interval from 1807, and prove that the King had taken the Prince's view. The Speaker says that this was among the facts which "alone would warrant him in forming an opinion—the King's important declaration in 1806, that the Princess of Wales could never again be received as a member of his family, and could only be treated with the common forms of civility."

It seems scarcely conceivable that the whole evidence as to the intentions, etc. of the insane King was obtained, not from his own writings or words, but from a letter of the Queen's to the Council!

After discussion by the Privy Council they arrived at a unanimous conclusion that there should be restraint and restriction. But when the report came to be drawn up, the Chancellor, after declaring that the draft report was "admirable," declined peremptorily to sign it, adding that it would be an implication that he had changed his opinion as to the serious charges of adultery, pregnancy, etc., made in 1807. Through his influence they were inclined to make a declaration in her favour on this point. But now Lord Ellenborough interposed, insisting that he could not concur in anything that would affirm her innocence, as his private conviction was that she was guilty on these points. In this state of things it was determined to confine themselves to the strict questions at issue.

It is characteristic of the way that the affair was managed, that when all was settled, Lord Castlereagh came to the Speaker in the House of Commons with a paragraph, suggested by, or "much desired," by the Prince, in refutation of the words "suborned testimony," which the Princess had used. This was subsequently adopted.

The object of this proceeding had meanwhile heard of what was going on, and addressed a letter of remonstrance to Lord Harrowby, urging that it was all *ex parte*, and offering to submit her case to any fair tribunal, provided she was heard.* The reply was a copy of the report, in which it was set out: "That the intercourse between her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales and her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte should continue to be subject to regulation and restraint. That as to the postponement of the confirmation, it appears, by a statement under the hand of her Majesty the Queen, that your royal highness has conformed in this respect to the declared will of his Majesty." "We also humbly trust that we may be further permitted to notice some expressions in the letter of her royal highness. We refer to the words: 'suborned traducers.' As this expression, from the manner it is introduced, may perhaps be liable to misconstruction (however impossible it may be to suppose that it can have been so intended), to have reference to some part of the conduct of your royal highness, we feel it our bounden duty not to omit this opportunity of declaring that the documents laid before us afford the most ample proof that there is not the slightest foundation for such an aspersion."

* Huish, "Queen Caroline," i. 453.

In these domestic broils, the Regent was presented in the undignified attitude of contending, aided by his ministers and dependants, with two women—his wife and his daughter! Some one descanting, in his presence, on the victories of Lord Wellington "in the north," he burst out, after his favourite style: "D——n the north, and d——n the south, and d——n Wellington; the question is, how am I to be rid of this d——d Princess of Wales?"

CHAPTER IX.

1813.

At the bottom of Warwick Street, close to Charing Cross, there stood at this time an old mansion, known as Warwick House, occupying the ground nearly behind where the Military Club is now erected. All the space now covered by Carlton House Terrace was then laid out as garden and grounds of this mansion, as well as those of Carlton House. The residences of the father and daughter were only separated by the road. Warwick House was at this time in a state of dilapidation, and seemed like a convent. Here a small establishment had been formed of old servants, with Miss Knight as "lady companion," and hither the lively young Princess was delighted to come, indifferent as to the accommodation, for she was escaping from the Lower Lodge at Windsor and the supervision of the Queen. All that was allowed for the establishment was £14,000 a-year; £15 a-month was served out to her for pocket money, and £800 a-year for her wardrobe. It was capriciously determined that she should be kept back, and "an elegant little girl of fifteen" was to be her playmate. However, we find her occasionally at Carlton House. At one of these visits the Prince took Miss Knight aside, and inveighed a long time against his wife, making a particular charge against her allowing a smallpox mark to come on their daughter's nose, having, in fact, neglected to secure her little hands. *He* had always watched her. Then came the drawing-room held on February the 4th, and to which the young Princess was not allowed to go, though a story went round that she refused to go unless presented by her mother. At this drawing-room the Prince and his wife actually met each other and exchanged "a slight acknowledgment."

The young Princess was now to find that she had only come to town to be worried. She was "worn out with anxiety" as to her mother. Her health was not good, and her great relatives seemed to delight in harassing her. The Duchess of York filled her with alarm by volunteering to come and dine with her.

But presently she was further alarmed by one of the usual visits of intimidation from her father attended by his Prime Minister. They came to announce to her that a solemn tribunal was investigating her mother's behaviour; that "it was a very serious matter" and would end in a very painful way, that on the result depended whether she should ever be allowed to visit her again, that in the meantime all intercourse must cease. She was "dreadfully overcome," and her delicate nature seemed to be hurt also at this lecture being given in presence of strangers. For some weeks she was in anxious suspense, refusing to go out to parties or show herself in public, though pressed by Sir H. Halford and others, always declaring that it was unbecoming while her mother lay under such accusations. The finding was sent to the Duchess of Leeds, who handed it to her with true delicacy without opening it; this quite changed her bearing to that lady, showing how easily she could have been "led" if dealt with generously.

Soon the Duchess of Brunswick, her grandmother, died. She had been living in London, and gradually drawn into the family contest, and had not dared to take part with her own daughter. All were struck by her feeling and anxiety; she wrote letters to all that were concerned, she took it much to heart and reproached herself with not having visited her so much of late. She desired to see her remains, but this was forbidden. She was allowed to see her mother, who bore her loss philosophically enough. The latter was now beginning to complain of her daughter, desiring her to refuse to go to any ball unless she were asked.

But as the months rolled on, there were symptoms that the young Princess was growing weary and felt her strength failing. The lady in the interest of the Regent, Miss Mercer Elphinstone, was now sent to her. The Regent had taken a dislike to Miss Knight, finding that she would not be his tool. On one occasion he had declared with an oath, he would not have those d——d ladies—referring to the Duchess of Leeds also. Her situation was precarious and uncomfortable. The old Duchess would come from the Queen and Regent in tears, having been soundly reprimanded.

It was not unnatural that the young impulsive girl's thoughts should turn to those who took her part, and look for release to some romantic attachment or marriage. She had already had

"a flirtation," connected with which was a curious little history. Attached to the suite of the Duke and Duchess of York was a certain Captain Hesse, who had become a follower of the Princess of Wales—a person not to be encouraged, but the foolish mother seemed to have a fancy for bringing him and her daughter together; a fresh proof of her indiscretion, as well as of the wisdom of "restriction." The portrait of a hussar hung in the young Princess's room, which was no doubt that of this person, who was in the 18th Hussars, and not of the Duke of Devonshire, as it was supposed. The young Princess had been flattered by his compliments, and as Miss Mercer, in 1832, told the story to Mr. Greville, even corresponded with him. He was employed to secretly convey the mother's letters to her daughter. He was sent to Spain with his regiment, and was there wounded, on which the Princess of Wales, according to Captain Gronow, wrote to Lord Wellington, forwarding his watch and picture, and begging that he might be carefully looked after. When the Duke of York's scandal came out the young Princess became alarmed as to her letters, and got Miss Mercer to require that they should be returned. This he refused to do, but was forced to give them up. His later life was that of an adventurer. He was expelled from Naples, and shot in a duel by one Léon, supposed to be a son of Napoleon's.

Another admirer came upon the scene in the shape of her cousin, the Duke of Gloucester, more than double her age. This prince seemed to have conceived the idea that he might recommend himself, and tried to show her that he was her friend and would be her protector. At one of the magnificent balls given at Carlton House, the foolish Duke, known so well as "Silly Billy," whose pretensions annoyed and disgusted the Regent, devoted himself to her so particularly, that a request was sent to her by Lady Liverpool to change her place. After the Queen and her family had gone, the young Princess apologised to them both, when the Duke seized the occasion to declare himself devoted to her, and ready to come forward whenever she would cast her eyes on him. And he used his opportunity with such effect, that before August she had confided to Sir H. Halford that the man she preferred was the Duke of Gloucester.* The Regent at once put it aside, with many lectures to his daughter. The strangest part of the affair seems to be that she was encouraged in it by Sir Henry Halford.

This lively girl had another *penchant*—the young Duke of Devonshire—at that time sought and followed by all the matrons in London. At balls, he danced nearly the whole night with her

* Miss Knight, "Autobiography," i. 255.

and the Princess Mary alternately. Being of a romantic turn, he also was believed to nourish a tender passion for his future queen, and the Regent looked on complacently, seeing that this would attach him to his party. It is evident that various matrimonial schemes were kept before her mind by the adroit Halford, with a view to some serious alliance; for at this moment a fresh intrigue or plan was on foot by which the Regent was to find relief. There now were fair hopes of crushing his wife, or of driving her from the country, while a suitable marriage might also remove his daughter—his rival with the public.

Meanwhile discussions on the quarrel with his wife were embarrassing. The ministry were pressed on the point why the Douglases were not prosecuted for perjury, and could only reply that there were reasons which made it unadvisable; while Mr. Canning declared that the report of 1807 conveyed a "complete, satisfactory, and unlimited acquittal." It was no wonder that Lord Castlereagh came to the Speaker to tell him of the "irritation" of the Regent—his own ministers seemed to have "thrown him over." They complained that he was "quite intractable." He talked of writing a letter to the Speaker, to be read to the House. They contrived a soothing answer—reminding him that the Speaker had given his opinion.

The Chancellor, too, seems to have come in for his share of ill-humour. "Places," he said, "he must dispose of without reference to anybody but myself, if I am to continue Chancellor. I doubt whether I am: the Prince having applied for all, and I having refused him all. I am too low, and too ill, to mix with the world, and I therefore absented myself yesterday, and shall do so to-day. The P. has been treating me with so much unkindness, because I won't do as to his wife and daughter as he wishes—in a way—that one more such interview as I have had, if it occurs, will save me the trouble of appointing to the secretaryship, or anything else where the officer goes out of office with the Chancellor."

During the next few days, to the astonishment of the public, the Carlton House papers, *The Herald* and *Post*, became filled with revolting matter of the old evidence of "the delicate investigation," the former paper being directed by a low bruising parson, Bate Dudley,* one of the Prince's favourites.

* The history of this clergyman is truly edifying. His whole course is marked by "duels, boxing-matches, libels; at last purchasing a 'fat' living for a large sum, to which his bishop refused to induct him, but ending respectably as a baronet—Sir Henry Bate Dudley—and a country gentleman."—See Taylor, "Records," and "The Vauxhall Affray: an encounter with 'Fighting Fitzgerald.'"

This scandal was the retort of the Prince's friends, and the materials could only have been supplied by them.

No wonder Mr. Whitbread renewed the attack, dwelling on the scandalous remarks and statements with which the papers were filled, and asking when the Prince, "as protector of his wife," was ready to take proceedings to restrain them. Excited debates followed, in which the Prince's character was badly mauled, Lord Milton "advising persons in high station to beware how they trifled with the feelings of the public." He almost in plain terms accused the Prince of causing the publication of the evidence. Mr. Whitbread presented a petition from Sir John Douglas, and made some extraordinary statements, as it were, in defence of that person. He had been informed by him that Lady Douglas had been examined by a Treasury official before a magistrate in February last.

Among those who vindicated the Government was Mr. Romilly, who proved by precedents that such inquiries were legal and had often been permitted. Two or three days later he was waited on by Nash, the architect, who was employed in carrying out the Prince's "hobbies," and who, since his project of the new Regent's Park, enjoyed the highest favour. Nash said that "the manly part" he had taken in the debate had been very thankfully received at Carlton House, and that his royal employer was very anxious to see and consult with him on the subject of the Princess of Wales. Romilly declined; but was told, on a later visit, by Lord Yarmouth, "that his advice had been followed with all the respect and attention that it deserved." This astonished him a little, as he had given no advice. With the curious love of intrigue which characterised Carlton House, persistent efforts were made to attract him, and he was asked, "as entirely from Lord Yarmouth, and without direct authority from the Prince, if he would take the Chancellorship without his party." He positively declined. It is amusing to follow the pertinacity with which this scheme was insisted on. The architect came again. "He said that he did not come to me by any authority whatever from the Prince; but that, since he had seen me, he had had a very long conversation with the Prince, at which no person was present, the Prince having made some excuse for sending away Lord Yarmouth; and that in that conversation the Prince had talked much about me, and of the confidence he was disposed to place in me; and had said that, in a matter respecting his own family, he had a right to consult me as his private counsel. The Prince, in the course of what he said, remarked that I now never left my name at Carlton House, which is true: since the restrictions on the Regency ceased, I have omitted to do so. To all this I answered,

that the more I considered the subject, the more I felt the great impropriety of the Prince taking advice relative to the Princess from any person but his responsible ministers; and that I could not reconcile it to any notions I entertained of my duty to offer him any advice." He was then asked to dine at Mr. Nash's, when, to his surprise, he found Lord Yarmouth, who seemed almost a stranger to the house. But, before this nobleman's arrival, he was taken aside and assured by his host that "everything was in confusion at Carlton House; that was the moment for bringing about a change of administration; that he was himself—i.e. the Prince—most anxious that it should be accomplished; and that I was the link by which the Prince might be reunited with his old friends." He was again rebuffed, and told it was impossible.

Such were the clumsy and profitless arts by which the game at Carlton House was carried on, resembling more the intrigues of the Sultan's palace than of an English ruler.

The most curious feature in the transaction was this, that the publication of all the noisome matter relating to this delicate investigation would seem to have been actually prompted by the good and admirable Romilly; for, in his discussions with Nash, he had made the remark—rather incautiously—that since so much had been published as to the Princess the whole had better be known. As it was, these advances had the effect of making the lawyer take a rather more tolerant view of the Prince and his party, though he continued inflexible as to the point of actual adhesion.

Addresses of congratulation were voted by the City of London and other bodies to the Princess of Wales, which were brought up with some confusion and mobbing. Alarming cries of "To Carlton House!" were heard, whither they were prepared to draw her carriage, and had assembled at Westminster Bridge for the purpose. The Regent judiciously went out of town in the morning.

She was encouraged by this growing popularity to appear at the Opera, which she did on May 29th; though it must have been a mortification to her to receive a well-meant warning from Mr. Whitbread, imploring her to be very careful about her dress, and, in short, to "cover her neck." The poor lady, who was to receive all sorts of contradictory instructions and advice from the friends who had "taken up her case," wept bitterly at the affront. But she was indemnified when at the theatre, and there was a burst of applause, mingled with which were two or three hisses. "I heard afterwards that the Dowager Lady C——y was one of those who hissed—more shame to her! It is said a very great lady, who is now far advanced in years, the mother of a

particularly pious nobleman, was the leader of this disapprobation."*

Another incident which delighted the public was the strange meeting of the separated mother and daughter. As she was returning, in the forenoon of March the 9th, in her carriage down Constitution Hill, she observed the Princess Charlotte, in her carriage, proceeding along Piccadilly towards Hyde Park. Immediately ordering her coachman to turn round, and the horses running nearly at a gallop, she overtook the Princess Charlotte's carriage in Hyde Park, near the bridge. The royal mother and daughter, from the windows of their carriages, affectionately embraced each other, and continued in earnest conversation for about ten minutes.

At this point recurs the memory of the poor old insane King, now almost forgotten, to whom his son paid a visit, which the valet-scribes of the Court declared "proved him susceptible of the finest feelings, and that he could and did regard the duties of a son. The filial affection by which the Prince Regent has been distinguished will ever be remembered to his honour, and will be more than sufficient to counteract the base calumnies of all the foul-mouthed revilers of dignities. His royal highness entered the room at Windsor where his venerable parent was, and heard him lamenting his blindness in the passage from Milton: 'Oh dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon.'"

This was indeed a sad spectacle enough, and had such an effect upon the Regent that "he burst into a flood of tears, and was obliged to retire to another apartment."

This sensibility—something after the manner of Sterne—attended him through his life, being displayed on occasions of romantic interest. Witness the congratulation which he had, a few months before, addressed to Lord Wellington.

* Lady C. Campbell, "Diary."

CHAPTER X.

1813—1814.

THE REGENT TO LORD WELLINGTON.

"Carlton House, July 3, 1813.

"My dear Lord,

"Your glorious conduct is beyond all human praise, and far above my reward. I know no language the world affords worthy to express it. I feel I have nothing left to say, but devoutly to offer up my prayers of gratitude to Providence that it has in its omnipotent bounty blessed my country and myself with such a general. You have sent me, among many other trophies of your unrivalled fame, the staff of a French marshal, and I send you in return that of England. The British army will hail it with enthusiasm, while the whole universe will acknowledge these valorous efforts which have so imperiously called for it. That uninterrupted health and still increasing laurels may still continue to crown you through a glorious and long career of life are the never-ceasing and most ardent wishes of, my dear sir,

"Your very sincere and faithful Friend,

"G. P. R."

It would take long to unfold the pitiful incidents of this most pitiful warfare, and what further unworthy devices were used to harass the Princess of Wales. She was refused permission to remain in the palace at Kensington, on the ground that the Prince required it.*

* Lord Berkeley, in Lord Auckland's "Memoirs."

The withdrawal of the use of Kensington Palace, with its privilege of firing, light, etc., made a serious difference; and she had now to look out for a house in town. When she selected Lady Reid's, in Curzon Street, and nearly concluded for it, it was refused to her. It almost seemed as though difficulties had been put in the way. She then fixed on Connaught House. Even the reputable banking house of Drummond's refused to let her overdraw for the small sum of £500.

What the Prince was most eager for now was the marriage of his daughter, and he had already fixed on a husband. This was the Prince of Orange, a young man who had been educated at English schools, and was serving on Lord Wellington's staff. Sir Henry Halford, whom we have seen favouring a *penchant* for the Duke of Gloucester, had suggested the Dutch prince to her. He was coming over with despatches for Lord Wellington, and the business was at once entered on. She avoided meeting him. But Lady Anne Smith and Sir Henry worked hard, and at the end of November she was heard to say that "the prince was certainly adored in the army, and that Lord Wellington, his brothers, and particularly John Fremantle, spoke highly of him." At a dinner given at Carlton House in December, a print of the candidate was placed on a chair to be looked at, and the young girl thought it "not ugly." His father had just got back his dominions, which was naturally in favour of the young prince.

The Regent, then at a party, was in high good-humour. He presented her with some jewels, and joked about a ring. The "little Lord Arran" was heard to say to one of the Princesses: "It will do, it will do," holding up his hands with delight. In short, the sagacious Brougham, who was watching the situation, was quite convinced that she would accept him.

It was amusing to find that the portrait of the hussar was at this time taken down and made a present of to Lady Anne Smith, and that of the Prince of Orange hung up in its place. Another party was given at Carlton House, at which she was to meet him for the first time. The young Princess was much agitated, and dressed herself in violet satin and blonde lace. The Prince of Orange turned out to be rather plain and sickly looking, but had a manly soldierlike manner. The Princess paid him this compliment—he was by no means "so disagreeable as she had expected;" and the happy Regent took them into another room, where they walked up and down together. He impressed her favourably at dinner by "talking very handsomely of the old liberties of Holland." Later, the Regent came to her. "Well, it will not do?" he asked anxiously. And she answered to his delight: "I don't say that; I like his manner very well

so far." Without further delay, the eager father joined their hands.

Two days later both paid the young Princess a visit of ceremony. The lovers retired to talk, while the Regent sat down with Miss Knight. It was to be kept a secret, he said, but she was to keep her charge dearly, and see there was "no flirtation." Then the pious Prince spoke of her going to Windsor to be confirmed and "take the sacrament with the family." But while thus engaged they were strangely interrupted by hearing the young Princess burst into a violent fit of hysterical tears. The Princes started up, and both hurried into the other room. They found the Prince of Orange much scared and the Princess in deep distress. "What," exclaimed her father adroitly, "is he saying good-bye?" She only replied: "Not yet," and hurried to her room. The Prince had to take the lover away with him.

It seems that it had been told to her, for the first time, that she would have to leave England and live two or three months of the year in Holland. But she herself relates what took place in her own natural style: "He told me yesterday what has cut me to the heart nearly, that he expected and wished me to go abroad with him afterwards to Holland, but that I should have a home here and there, and be constantly coming backwards and forwards; that he wished me to go to Berlin, and travel in different parts of Germany. He was all kindness, I must say; at the same time, as he told me, it should never prevent my seeing and having my friends with me as much as ever I liked; that he should be happy if they would all go with me, or else come and see me. His anxious wish, I must say, is to do what I like as much as possible to make me happy, and study everything that can make me so. I have only to add that this latter plan must, as you will see, remain in perfect uncertainty, as it must depend upon a peace, or else I could not certainly go; besides which, this is a step which cannot be taken without consent of Parliament."

But this was only a temporary difficulty, and she was soon persuaded into compliance. The matter, for the next three or four months, was considered to be settled, though the marriage was not formally announced. The Regent at this time seems to have been, unhappily, more than usually addicted to the favourite vice of the day; his daughter saying in her expressive phrase that there was generally "too much oil in the lamp." Thus at a fête at the New Military College of Sandhurst, where the whole royal family were assembled, and the Queen on her departure asked for the Regent, he was not then to be found; and the ladies learned that he, with the Duke of York, the Prince of

Orange, and other noble guests, were under the table.* The Duke of York hurt his head very seriously against a wine cellaret.

On January 6th, 1814, we find the Regent at Belvoir Castle, celebrating the baptism of an heir with great and prolonged festivities. It is no surprise, then, that in February he was seriously ill, "kept low," and in a nervous state; indeed, at one period it was thought his life was in danger. He was much disturbed at the Princess Charlotte having a carriage built for herself, but more particularly at its not being ordered from his own coachmaker. In this depressed condition he spoke of going to Hanover, and would burst into tears on an allusion to his sister Princess Amelia. No wonder that Mr. Brougham thus lugubriously dwelt on the situation, and foreboded evil. We must, however, make due allowances for partisanship: "Truly things may be said to be desperate when the most unpopular King since James II., at the most alarming crisis, is able to do exactly what he pleases, and by whom. We owe it to his forbearance that Macmahon and Tyrwhitt are not appointed Lord High Treasurer and Lord High Admiral."

In January, 1814, the Princess went through the ordeal of a visit to Windsor, where, as she says: "What with congratulations, ill-concealed joy as ill-concealed sorrow, good humour and bad, peeping out, my Confirmation and the Sacrament, and little jokes and witty sayings that were circulated, I was both excessively put out and overcome, and when I returned to town I was quite ill for some days afterwards." When she got back to London she was left to spend her birthday alone. A few days later she was dining with her mother, when the foolish lady began pouring dissatisfaction into her daughter's ear—if it were not there already—saying, "all the world had hoped for promotions, and for emancipation from prisons, etc. etc., the day of her coming of age, but that no public testimony of joy had been shown on the occasion, and it had passed away in a mournful silence." Princess Charlotte was considerably struck, and replied: "Oh, but the war and the great expenses of the nation occasion my coming of age to be passed over at present." "A very good excuse, truly," said the Princess of Wales, "and you are child enough to believe it!"

In the April of this year a proceeding of somewhat romantic interest took place in the chapel at Windsor. Some repairs or alterations were being made, and it was determined to open the coffin which held the remains of Charles I. The propriety of this step was questionable, but the curiosity among antiquarians to

* Miss Knight, "Autobiography," i. 252.

ascertain whether the account handed down was accurate in all particulars could not be resisted. The historic associations kindled the imagination of the Prince Regent, who determined, with the Duke of Cumberland, to be present. Accordingly, on the 13th of April, he attended with his brother the Duke of Cumberland and others. Within a leaden coffin a wooden one appeared, which was opened. Sir Henry Halford describes what was seen. "The body carefully wrapped up in cerecloth, into the folds of which a quantity of unctuous matter mixed with resin, as it seemed, had been melted. . . . At length the whole face was disengaged from its covering. The complexion of the skin of it was dark and discoloured. The forehead and temples had lost little or nothing of their muscular substance; the cartilage of the nose was gone, but the left eye, in the first moment of exposure, was open and full, though it vanished immediately; and the pointed beard was perfect." The head was held up for the spectators to examine. Contemporaneous accounts describe it as having been sewn on; but the threads, of course, had long since decayed away. The hair was found to be thick and a brown colour, but the pointed beard was of a reddish tinge.

A sort of *procés verbal* was drawn up and attested by the Prince, who hurried to his daughter's room (as Miss Knight used to relate) to vent his emotions after he had been much affected. He gave her a lock of the hair which he had cut off.*

Subjoined are Lord Byron's scurrilous lines "On the Prince Regent being seen standing between the coffins of Charles I. and Henry VIII.":

THE VAULT REFLECTION.

Famed for contemptuous breach of sacred ties,
By headless Charles see heartless Harry lies;
Between them stands another sceptred thing,
It moves, it reigns, in all but name a king.
Charles to his people, Harry to his wife,
In him the double tyrant wakes to life.
Justice and death have mixed their dust in vain;
Each royal vampire wakes to life again.
Ah, what can tombs avail, since these disgorge
The blood and dust of both to mould a George!

* "Notes and Queries," Third Series, viii. 444—Halford's Essays, 1833.

CHAPTER XI.

1813—1814.

In discussing the alliance between the Prince of Orange and Princess Charlotte, it is singular that the embarrassment as to the choice of residence did not at once strike the statesmen concerned—for both the parties were heirs to thrones—and it would seem impossible that a mode of living could be devised that would be acceptable to both countries. The course pursued was to leave the question open, both retaining the right of succession, the only one stipulation being as regards the children, that the two crowns were not to devolve on one person, but if there were two sons, the eldest should succeed in England, the second in Holland.* But this seemed remote, the pressing question being where the young pair were to reside in the meantime. Was the "Hope of England" to be removed from the people that loved her, and that she loved, to the Hague? Early in March, the Dutch envoy, "Baron Van der Duyn van Maasdam," arrived with the solemn formal proposals of marriage from the Dutch Court—this being always a matter of strict etiquette. He brought also a portrait of the Prince, with the modest offering of £14,000 for jewels. But the affianced husband did not seem to gain upon his betrothed. She was treated ungraciously enough, in a childish way; no information was vouchsafed to her as to her establishment, or as to the ladies who were to be in her suite. No wonder she began to listen to whispers. At her mother's she was told that the proposed marriage was unpopular with the nation, and by March, it was evident that the high-spirited girl, to whom it now came home that she was "being got out of the

* Castlereagh, "Letters," ix. 151–181.

way," began to meditate rebellion. Even in this affair her mother was to be affronted, for the Dutch envoys were cautioned not to go near her.*

But what helped to shipwreck the whole affair was the opportune arrival of a very important personage, namely, the Czar's sister, the Grand Duchess Catherine, widow of the Duke of Oldenburg. The object of this visit has not been very clearly ascertained, though it could hardly have been with a view to the design which the public had only the year before assumed was on foot, namely, that of marrying her to the Regent himself, so soon as he obtained a divorce. She was a slightly-made, graceful, and interesting personage. The idea that she had come with any set purpose to break off the Princess's marriage is doubtful. Still, the Prince of Orange eventually married her sister. It would take a long time to unfold the successive stages of this struggle; how the young girl, prompted by Brougham, met every objection and worsted her father and his counsellor. The whole affair, from whatever influence, presently came to a dead stop.

In this desperate state of things the only resource was to send for the *fiancé*, who was, in truth, taking the matter rather calmly. He arrived in town on April 30th. It was strange that, following the regular modern habit of hospitality to foreign sovereigns, he was allowed to shift for himself in the matter of quarters, and found a lodging at his tailor's. This may have been to keep his incognito.†

Miss Mercer (Lady Keith) told Mr. Greville in 1832, that there was another reason for this change—that the Princess had fallen in love with "Prince Augustus of Prussia," with whom, she says, Miss Knight had contrived clandestine meetings.

During this struggle the nation was in a great tumult of joy at the defeat of "the Corsican ogre." One of the results of this catastrophe was the return of the long-exiled King of France. He was now to take his departure, and the Regent, who, as we have seen, had shown the exiled family the most marked honours, made this the occasion for a fresh and last display. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm and cordiality of the crowd, and the exertions of the Regent. The French royal family were to come to town in solemn procession, from Stanmore Priory.

During this interesting proceeding, at which the whole of London assisted, there were two persons almost purposely excluded, the Princess of Wales and her daughter. The young girl, who would have enjoyed such a show, was going herself in her carriage to the park to get as good a view as she could, when

* Stockmar, "Memoirs," i. 15.
† "Mem. Regency," i. 75.

the Grand Duchess, calling by chance, brought her to her hotel. There, we are told, neither the Prince nor the royal family took any notice of her, "and this neglect seemed to press hard upon her," adds Miss Knight. However, the honest mob, who by a sort of instinct seemed to know her case, welcomed her with delighted acclamations, scarcely allowing her to pass; indeed, wherever she appeared now, this was the case, though she did not seek it. The Regent certainly showed the King and his family the most unbounded devotion, made them flowery speeches in French, while his brother Clarence attended the party to France.

But there were even greater festivities at hand: the foreign sovereigns were coming to London, and the Regent would have good opportunity for displaying his taste for pageants and entertainments. But every step he took in these agreeable *plaisances* was to bring him mortification and a reminder of his *bête noir*. That irrepressible being, his wife, would take advantage of the presence of strangers to claim their attentions. Two drawing-rooms had been announced with much flourish in honour of the illustrious guests, and it was understood that the young Princess was to appear at them. The gossips found an explanation for the two ceremonials in its being a device by which the hostile couple might avoid meeting. But at the end of May the public were favoured with another episode of this unhappy scandal, which took the shape of the following communication, dated Windsor Castle, May 23rd, 1814:

"The Queen considers it to be her duty to lose no time in acquainting the Princess of Wales that she has received a communication from her son, the Prince Regent, in which he states that her Majesty's intention of holding two drawing-rooms in the ensuing month having been notified to the public, he must declare that he considers that his own presence at her Court cannot be dispensed with; and that he desires it to be understood, for reasons of which he alone can be the judge, to be his fixed and unalterable determination not to meet the Princess of Wales upon any occasion, either in public or private. The Queen is thus placed under the painful necessity of intimating to the Princess of Wales the impossibility of her Majesty's receiving her royal highness at the drawing-rooms.

"Charlotte R."

The Princess was determined to accept the challenge and go. Mr. Whitbread, however, in the most peremptory manner, required a letter of submission, written by himself, to be adopted.

The answer was of the humblest kind, alluding to her unprotected state, and asking that the reason of such a slight should be explained to the illustrious guests. She declared, however, that she would appeal to the public. The Queen answered, that she would have complied with the request, only that the proposed publication made it unnecessary. What follows, and related by Mr. Grey Bennett, shows what a political instrument the poor lady had been made by adverse and contending advisers.

"On the night of the 25th Creevey called upon Whitbread, who showed him the letter and his answer. Creevey's remark was: 'You have cut her throat;' and, although he does not go all the lengths of Brougham, who persists she ought to go to Court, yet he maintains that she ought to have made as great a noise as possible, demanding reasons why she should be so excluded, etc. etc. Whitbread was much hurt at this; and yesterday, the 22nd, he told Creevey he had deprived him of his night's rest. Last night at Brookes's, Creevey and I being there, Whitbread came in from the play very much out of spirits. The waiter gave him a letter from Brougham, who had missed seeing him in the morning. Creevey told me it was very impertinent. Whitbread sent his reply, and Creevey still maintaining that the Princess was lost without a hope of redemption, if some way was not found to get her out of the scrape, proposed that she should write a letter to the Prince, calling upon him to state why she should be excluded from Court, and that her assent to the Queen's proposal was out of respect to her mother, and that she did not wish to be any impediment to her holding a drawing-room. This letter was writing when I left Brookes's this morning at two. It has long been understood that the Princess returning to Court was the cause there was no drawing-room, and that the Prince was endeavouring to persuade the Queen to take this step, she resisting unless writing by his order. At last she has consented, and she will live to repent it. On the night of the 26th an answer came back from the Queen, thanking the Princess for her determination. MacMahon had no notion of the letter to the Regent, and told Creevey in the morning that it was a sad scrape the Regent had got into. Creevey said: 'Yes, it is, as the Regent has now declared his determination that she should not be crowned.' 'No, but he has not,' replied MacMahon. 'Yes, but he has,' says Creevey—quoting the words, 'public and private'—'we think it so, and have acted accordingly.' MacMahon then said that 'he was sick to death of the whole concern, and that he never went to bed without wishing he might never rise again.' So much for little Mac.

Lord Sidmouth, upon M. Angelo Taylor speaking to him on the subject, said it was a fatal business.

"The letter to the Prince was a spirited one. She told him that she had 'been declared innocent. I will not submit to be treated as guilty. Sir, your royal highness may positively refuse to read this letter; but the world must know that I have written it, and they will see my real motives for foregoing, in this instance, the rights of my rank. Occasions, however, may arise (one, I trust, is far distant) when I must appear in public, and your royal highness must be present also. I waive my rights in a case where I am not absolutely bound to assert them, in order to relieve the Queen, as far as I can, from the painful situation in which she is placed by your royal highness, not from any consciousness of blame, nor from any doubt of the existence of those rights, or of my own worthiness to enjoy them. Sir, the time you have selected for this proceeding is calculated to make it peculiarly galling. Many illustrious strangers are already arrived in England. This season your royal highness has chosen for treating me with fresh and unprovoked indignity; and, of all his Majesty's subjects, I alone am prevented by your royal highness from appearing in my place, to partake of the general joy; and am deprived of the indulgence in those feelings of pride and affection permitted to every mother but me.'"

After this protest she went down to Worthing, where she displayed herself on the beach. Here she already conceived the idea of leaving the country, demanding £50,000 a-year, which the Emperor of Russia, her friend as she considered him, was to ask the Regent for.

On June 8th the sovereigns arrived. Then began a series of fêtes, and a banquet of the most magnificent description.

After the first interview of the General with the Prince, an interesting scene took place: "the Prince Regent returned with the gallant Blucher from his private apartments, and in the centre of the grand hall, surrounded by the people, placed a blue ribbon on his shoulder, fastening it with his own hand, to which was hung a beautiful medallion, with a likeness of the Prince, richly set with diamonds. The Marshal knelt while the Prince was conferring this honour, and on his rising, kissed the Prince's hand. The Prince and the General bowed to the public, whose acclamations in return exceeded description."

London, as Miss Knight says, "was out of its senses," rushing after these foreign visitors, acclaiming them with delight. But it must have been infinitely mortifying to the host to find himself greeted, in the presence of the guests he wished to honour, with hisses and groans! A fellow put his head into the carriage,

saying: "Where's your wife?" On which the Regent, with readiness and good-humour, said quietly: "Emperor, that's for you!" The latter had insisted that his sister should sit in the same carriage with him and the Regent, which the latter declared was impossible, "as no woman ever went in the same carriage with the sovereign." On such a point of etiquette he could be firm and vehement enough, and the discussion was maintained for hours.

There was now a grand state night at the opera, which all the potentates were to visit. But again to the Regent it was to be a night of mortification, for his wife intended to be there—a competing attraction. Hitherto, his efforts to have her excluded from the various pageants had been successful. To the Guildhall banquet, "the City," who were friendly, dared not ask her. From the theatre he would also have excluded her if he could. Here was the scene:

"When we arrived at the opera," says her lady-in-waiting, "to the Princess's and all her attendants' infinite surprise, we saw the Regent placed between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, and all the minor princes, in a box to the right. 'God save the King' was performing when the Princess entered, and consequently she did not sit down. I saw the Regent was at that time standing and applauding the Grassinis. As soon as the air was over, the whole pit turned round to the Princess's box and applauded her. We intreated her to rise and make a curtsy, but she sat immovable, and at last, turning round, she said to Lady ——: 'My dear, Punch's wife is nobody when Punch is present.' 'We shall be hissed,' said Sir W. Gell. 'No, no,' again replied the Princess with infinite good-humour, 'I know my business better than to take the morsel out of my husband's mouth; I am not to seem to know that the applause is meant for me till they call my name.' The Prince seemed to verify her words, for he got up and bowed to the audience. This was construed into a bow to the Princess, most unfortunately; I say most unfortunately, because she has been blamed for not returning it; but I, who was an eye-witness of the circumstance, know the Princess acted just as she ought to have done. The fact was, the Prince took the applause to himself; and his friends, or rather his toadies (for they do not deserve the name of friends), to save him from the imputation of this ridiculous vanity, chose to say, that he did the most beautiful and elegant thing in the world, and bowed to his wife!

"When the opera was finished, the Prince and his supporters were applauded, but not enthusiastically; and scarcely had his royal highness left the box, when the people called for the

Princess, and gave her a very warm applause. She then went forward and made three curtsies, and hastily withdrew. When the coachman attempted to drive home through Charles Street, the crowd of carriages was so immense it was impossible to pass down that street, and with difficulty the Princess's carriage backed, and we returned past Carlton House, where the mob surrounded her carriage, and, having once found out that it was her royal highness, they applauded and huzzaed her. The mob opened the carriage doors, and some of them insisted upon shaking hands with her, and asked if they should burn Carlton House. 'No, my good people,' she said; 'be quite quiet—let me pass, and go home to your beds.'"

The poor lady was buoyed up by this success, in the belief that the sovereign would come to see her, and a rumour reached her that the Czar was to call on that or the following day, but he never came. She was delighted. She gradually gave way to the hope which charmed her, and said—poor soul!—"My ears are very ugly, but I would give them both to persuade the Emperor to come to me to a ball, supper, any entertainment that he would choose." She dressed, and waited till seven, but no Emperor came.

The reception the Regent met with on some occasions was painful. "The Prince Regent, with his superb retinue, passed along Pall Mall without interruption; but his carriage no sooner entered the park than the multitudes assembled there recognised his royal highness, and he was annoyed by the most dismal yells, groans, and hisses, which continued the whole way from the stableyard to the Queen's house. The horses were put to their full speed to carry his royal highness through this ungracious scene."

The sovereigns were in a difficult position, and it is said that the Emperor of Russia had settled to call upon her, when, on setting out, one of the ministers came in hot haste from the Regent, imploring him in his master's name not to do so. The King of Prussia took the half-hearted course of sending his chamberlain.

"The Regent was much hissed and groaned at," wrote a lady to Lord Fitzharris, "on his way to and from the drawing-room. The Princess of Wales was in one of the private boxes upstairs at the play last night, and had a little boy placed before her. Towards the end of the play a man in a higher box stood up, told the house they were honoured with the presence of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, and desired she might be cheered, which she was, three times. 'God save the King' called for, and excessive applause at the lines, 'Confound their politics, frustrate their knavish tricks;' and, after all, this champion called for

three cheers more for an oppressed Princess, who should go to Court'—more cheering. All this is lamentable." Nor was this the only victory obtained by the luckless Princess. It will be recollected that on the recovery of the King, twenty years before, White's club gave a grand political gala, and it was determined to give an entertainment on a scale of similar magnificence to the sovereigns. The Duke of Devonshire was induced to offer his spacious house and gardens in Piccadilly for the festival, and many of the fine old trees which ornamented his grounds had actually been cut down. "But suddenly, when the committee was in council, a message came from a great person to the committee to desire to know what style of company they meant to ask to their ball, or some clumsy hint of this sort; which the committee however understood, for they sent back word that they meant to request the Regent himself to invite all the royalties whom he wished should be there, and that they should send a number of tickets to him for that purpose. But this was not deemed secure enough to exclude the obnoxious individual; for some member, a friend to the Regent (it was said to be Lord Yarmouth), made a motion that no member should give away his tickets except to his relations, or that some line of rank should be drawn, such as that no one but peers' daughters should be invited, so as to exclude *canaille* and higher rank likewise. Upon this Lord Sefton got up and said it was easy to see these confused proposals were meant to exclude the Princess of Wales; and he observed that, as one of the members, every ticket he subscribed for was his own, and everyone of them he intended to send to the Princess, to be disposed of as she pleased. Fourteen other members said the same; but as they were not the majority, and as those who were to pay for the diversion were not to have leave to do what they pleased at it, they determined they would give no ball at all." This, no doubt, was the origin of the animosity which so long raged between the Prince (as Regent and King) and the objecting nobleman; the latter, like Brummel, exercising his ready wit and persiflage on the weakness of his sovereign.

A few days after the scene at Drury Lane, there was to be a command-night at Drury Lane Theatre, and when the Regent's wife sent for a box she was informed they were all engaged. It is not uncharitable to presume that this was prompted by the Court. It was contrived that a box should be secured, when a letter arrived from Mr. Whitbread advising her on no account to go. Her case, he said, was coming on in the House of Commons. "You see, my dear," she said to one of her ladies, "how I am plagued. My friends torment me as much as my

enemies." Go, however, she would, but Mr. Whitbread arrived and succeeded in dissuading her.

Nor was her daughter treated more kindly. During all these fêtes she was allowed to appear at only one dinner, but was rigorously excluded from even the parties given by noblemen in honour of the sovereigns. Even for the drawing-room she was allotted a garret at the top of the Queen's house to dress in, and it was only on the remonstrances of the surgeons that it was changed for a more suitable one. She was deeply wounded at the exclusion of her mother, and hesitated about going. However, with her usual spirit, she showed herself in the parks and public drives, her smiling face winning all hearts, and the people calling to her: "God bless you! Don't desert your mother!" Finally all these festivities were brought to a close, and the sovereigns departed.

One result of these meetings of the continental sovereigns in London and Paris was the famous fantastic league known as "The Holy Alliance," engendered in the somewhat *exalté* disposition of the Emperor Alexander. When it was arranged, the Regent was invited to join. The spirit of the engagement was wholly foreign to the English Constitution, as Lord Liverpool pointed out to his royal master, who accordingly put it aside in the following conventional reply to each of the three members:

THE REGENT TO THE SOVEREIGNS.

"Carlton House, Oct. 6, 1815.

"My dear Brother and Cousin,

"I have had the honour to receive your Majesty's letter, together with the copy of the treaty between your Majesty and your high allies, signed at Paris on the 26th of September. As the forms of the British Constitution, which I am called upon to maintain in the name and in the place of the King my father, prevent me from acceding to the treaty in the form in which it is laid before me, I choose this way to convey to the august sovereigns who have signed it, my entire concurrence in the principles which they have expressed, and in the declaration which they have made, that they will take the Divine precepts of the Christian religion as the unalterable rule of their conduct in all their social and political conduct."

CHAPTER XII.

1814.

We may now return to the question of the young Princess's marriage, the progress of which had been suspended during these galas.

A great concession, as it was conceived, was now to be made, and two Articles were forwarded to her by Lord Liverpool, to the effect that she was not to leave the country without permission of the Regent, who was to have power to recall her, and that she was not to be absent more than a certain number of months in the year. She answered that "This gave her no security in case the Regent and the Prince of Orange should agree." She debated the question formally with the ministers, and at last Lord Liverpool told her bluntly that her wishes could not be complied with. On this she wrote to her suitor with unconcealed delight to tell him that it was all at an end!

However, the matter was once more renewed. The Prince of Orange appealed to his father, and finally an Article was accepted by both parties, to the effect that she was not to be taken out of the kingdom against her consent, or detained longer than she chose.

The Regent was the bearer of this concession, and, accompanied by the Bishop of Salisbury, came to pay one of his dreaded visits, threatening and cajoling her. He was greatly out of humour, and tried to persuade her that now the concession was made, she must give no more trouble and of herself yield on the point. This was on June 6th. Miss Knight also he tried to bring round, protesting that he had only agreed to the marriage to please his daughter, and dwelling on his own "parental affection."

The old Queen then proceeded to buy her trousseau; and the young Princess was told that, as soon as her sovereign was gone, the wedding should take place. These proceedings threw her into intense alarm and anxiety. She seems also to have been seriously ill with an affection in her knee, the pain of which prevented her sleeping, so that the surgeons ordered her at once to the sea; but no attention was paid to them. The Czar even had been employed, bringing with him the Prince of Orange, begging of her to see him, and using all arguments, asking her, was she going to give up so good a match—"all to be praised by a Mr. Whitbread?" he added, pointing to *The Times* newspaper, which was on the table.

It seemed it was impossible to daunt the Prince of Orange. For all this worry and torture he was indirectly responsible: and, for a candidate, there was something undignified in his behaviour. She had now consented to see him, but their meetings did not add to his favour in her eyes. His behaviour, too, did not recommend him. It was reported that he came to her having taken too much wine, and was described as having come from some races on the top of a stage-coach, drunk and riotous. His future bride was heard to declare, that "he was so ugly she could not speak to him without turning away her face."

It having now fastened on her mind that if she once left the country her mother would be helpless, she tried to raise a new issue, announcing to him that she would not leave England; that when she had a house of her own it must be opened to both her parents. This he could not agree to. Disputes arose on petty subjects. She wished him to ride with her in the riding-house, to which he made some objection. She made a point of it; then, annoyed at her pertinacity, he broke away, and left her to recover her temper. Delighted at the pretext, she wrote to him that evening, June 16th:

"After what has passed upon this subject this morning between us (which was much too conclusive to require further explanation), I must consider our engagement from this moment to be totally and for ever at an end. I leave the explanation of this affair to be made by you to the Prince in whatever manner is most agreeable to you, trusting it entirely to your honour, of which I have never for a moment doubted. I cannot conclude without expressing the sincere concern I feel in being the cause of giving you pain."

At a ball that night at Hertford House, he laughed with a friend at what he called her "tantrums," but was gravely warned

that it was serious. On the next morning her letter reached him. She sent a copy of it to her mother, who was enchanted and flattered at being made the cause of the rupture. He did not answer it at once, but two days later wrote that at last he accepted the plain declaration so often made to him.

"8, Clifford Street, June 18, 1814.

"My dear Charlotte,

"I found the night before last your letter, and have lost no time to acquaint my family with its contents. But I cannot comply with your wish by doing the same with regard to the Regent, finding it much more natural that you should do it yourself; and it is, besides, much too delicate a matter for me to say anything to him on the subject. *Hoping* that you shall never feel any cause to repent of the step you have taken, I remain,

"Yours truly, "William."

The Princess laughed scornfully at this epistle. "Good English he writes," she said, pointing to the last sentence.

But there was, in truth, another important influence which had its share in this change. The volatile young Princess seems to have once more transferred her affections. In the crowd of kings and princes had arrived the Prince Leopold, a young man of two-and-twenty, who had struck her the very first time she saw him, when she expressed her astonishment that a young lady of her acquaintance, to whom he was devoting himself, could be indifferent to the attention of so handsome a man.* He had brought a letter to her from the Duke of Brunswick, and she was so pleased with him that, as she told Stockmar long after, she spoke of him to her aunt, the Duchess of York, saying that she would like to know him better, but had no opportunity, as she was excluded from all the balls; on which the Duchess declared she would give a ball for her specially. He was invited to tea at Warwick House, when he commended himself still further. In the park he would ride near the carriage and try to be noticed. He boldly allowed his aims to be known, and was adroit in his behaviour to the Regent. He succeeded in offending no one, and secured good-natured toleration and even good wishes for his success from all. After he went away, the Regent declared him to be a most honourable young man, and that he was perfectly satisfied with a letter of explanation which he had written to him.†

* Lady Rose Weigall, "Princess Charlotte," p. 133.

† Miss Knight, "Autobiography," i. 301.

The bishop had now been throwing out some alarming hints, to the effect that, unless the Princess yielded, some awful measures would be taken. Then came a lull. It was now the morning of the 11th of July, and it was known that the bishop had been closeted for hours with the Regent. The poor girl, conscious that some mischief was impending, was ill and nervous, when, about five o'clock, a message arrived that she and her duenna were to go over at once to Carlton House. She declared she was unequal to a fresh scene, and Miss Knight went alone. The Regent insisted his daughter should come the next day. Already it had leaked out that she was to be removed to her father's house, to a sort of honourable captivity. No visits or letters were to be received, and all her servants and friends were to be dismissed and some creatures of the Regent put about her. The following day she was again summoned, and again declined to go. Towards six o'clock the Regent made his appearance, and sent down for her. Now was the supreme moment. She came out from that interview "in the greatest agony," saying to Miss Knight that she had but an instant to speak to her, telling her that the new ladies were in the house, that the servants were dismissed, that she was to be shut up and was to see no one but his friends, and that if she did not go at once the Prince would come himself. Falling on her knees she exclaimed passionately: "God Almighty grant me patience!"

Miss Knight, then sent for, was told that she was dismissed —that her room was wanted for that very evening. The Regent added he was sorry to put a lady to inconvenience. She answered that her father had suffered for fifty years, serving his country, so she was not likely to mind a few hours' inconvenience. On this he said there was a room at Carlton House which she might have for a night or two. This she declined.

The young Princess was shut up in her bedroom when the bishop came and knocked violently at the door. This she fancied was her father come to seize her, and in fresh terror she fled away by another door.

As Miss Knight came out she met Miss Mercer crying, who declared that she could not find the Princess, and that she believed she had fled from the house. So it proved to be.

The next day all London was talking of the elopement, and the daring act of the young girl. Miss Mercer was at a window that looked into the lane that led from Warwick House when she heard people declare that it was the Princess that had passed them down the lane. The two ladies rushed to the Regent, and told him that the Princess had declared she would go to her mother, and before they could interfere was gone. The Prince

answered he was very glad, as now people would see what she was, and on the Continent, when it became known, no one would marry her. The bishop and Miss Mercer offered to go for her.

The young Princess had rushed into the street, and, stopping a hackney-coach, offered the astonished driver a guinea to take her to Connaught Place. Lord Brougham relates what followed. He was dining out when a message was brought to him begging him to go to the Princess of Wales. Assuming this to be one of the Princess of Wales's humours, and being tired with having sat up the night before, he sent word that he was unable to go. "The messenger brought back word that I was wanted on most particular business, and that a coach was waiting at the door by express commands. I was obliged to comply, and fell asleep as soon as I stepped into it, not awaking till it reached Connaught Place. I stumbled upstairs, still half asleep, to the drawing-room. To my astonishment, I found both my hands seized by the Princess Charlotte. She said: 'Oh, it is too long to tell now, for I have ordered dinner, and I hope it will soon come up.' We sat down to dinner, and she was in high spirits, seeming to enjoy herself like a bird set loose from its cage.

"There came while we were at table various persons sent by the Regent: the Chancellor Eldon, Bishop of Salisbury (the tutor); Lord Ellenborough; Adam, Chancellor of the Duchy of Cornwall; and Leach. All arrived one after another, and as they were announced the Princess or her daughter said what was to be done with each. Eldon being named, they said: 'Oh no; let him wait in his carriage,' which was, like that of the Princess Charlotte and all the others, a hackney-coach. The Duke of Sussex, not having been sent by the Regent, was brought upstairs; and none of the others had any communication with our party except the Duke of York, whom the Princess of Wales saw for a few minutes in the room below.

"'They may wear me out,' the Princess Charlotte said, 'by ill-treatment, and may represent that I have changed my mind and consented.' We then conversed upon the subject with the others, and after a long discussion on that and her lesser grievances, she took me aside and asked me what, upon the whole, I advised her to do. I said at once: 'Return to Warwick House or Carlton House, and on no account to pass a night out of her own house.' She was extremely affected, and cried, asking if I too refused to stand by her. I said quite the contrary, and that as to the marriage I gave no opinion, except that she must follow her own inclination entirely, but that her returning home was absolutely necessary; and in this all the rest fully agreed.

"The day now began to dawn, and I took her to the window. The election of Cochrane (after his expulsion owing to the sentence of the court, which both ensured his re-election and abolished the pillory) was to take place that day. I said: 'Look there, madam, in a few hours all the streets and the park, now empty, will be crowded with tens of thousands. I have only to take you to that window, and show you to the multitude, and tell them your grievances, and they will all rise in your behalf.' 'And why should they not?' I think she said, or some such words. 'The commotion,' I answered, 'will be excessive; Carlton House will be attacked—perhaps pulled down; the soldiers will be ordered out; blood will be shed; and if your royal highness were to live a hundred years it never would be forgotten that your running away from your father's house was the cause of the mischief; and you may depend upon it, such is the English people's horror of bloodshed, you never would get over it.' She at once felt the truth of my assertion, and consented to see her uncle Frederic."

The night was an exciting one. Not till two in the morning was she persuaded to yield. The heroic girl made a solemn protest, that she was resolved not to marry the Prince of Orange. She desired a note to be made of this protest, which was duly signed, and six copies were taken and given to those present. Her positive injunctions were laid on them, that if ever the attempt to renew the marriage should be made, it was to be given to the public. It is amazing to read the self-possession and decision of this young creature in staying an emergency. Her old enemy the Chancellor had a share in compelling her to surrender. "When we arrived," he says, "I informed her that a carriage was at the door, and we would attend her home. But home she would not go. She kicked and bounced; but would not go. Well, to do my office as gently as I could, I told her I was sorry for it, for until she did go, she would be obliged to entertain us, as we could not leave her. At last she accompanied us."*

The sensation caused by these proceedings may be imagined. From that moment the young Princess became endeared to the

* There were many accounts of this strange dramatic scene. Lord Brougham has been ridiculed for the share he gives himself in this affair. His various statements as to his sitting down to dinner with the Princess; the idea of such important personages as the Chancellor and others being kept waiting in hackney-coaches outside, and above all the melodramatic speech at the window, have been doubted. That his statements are substantially correct can be shown. Lord Dundonald, however, states —at the last page of his memoir—that the speech at the window was made by the Duke of Sussex. But this is improbable, as it is exactly the topic that the popular orator would have urged. Further, his account

people, for the fact of a young girl having to fly from the house of her father was a presumption of ill-treatment. Indeed, what can be said of the Regent, who at every step seemed to blunder afresh! It was remarked that the behaviour of the Princess of Wales showed an unexpected good sense, and no one, it was noticed, was so eager that the Princess should leave the house and go back to her father's.* It was natural that the young girl should consider this a desertion at such a crisis, and, after casting her lot with her mother, should resent such cold welcome. It seems that from this time a change took place in her feelings. An affectionate parent would have laid aside the cautious warnings of "advisers," and have chivalrously cast her lot with her. Such an element of strength would have been invaluable, and the idea of the Chief Justice issuing his Habeas Corpus, or the officers of the law arriving to drag the young Princess away, was too ludicrous to be entertained a moment. A tumult would have followed of a most serious kind, and the Regent have excited such a storm of execration, as he could never have surmounted. But the Princess of Wales at that moment was busy with a plan that concerned her own interest, and she might have been afraid of imperilling it.

As the young Princess was now to be under a sort of restraint, it was determined to carry on the war, and Mr. Brougham put forward the Duke of Sussex as his niece's protector. Accordingly, in the House of Lords, on July the 19th, after talking of his "agitated feelings," that Prince put questions to Lord Liverpool as to the position of the Princess: whether she was allowed to communicate with her friends in writing or otherwise; was she prevented going to the sea; was she to have an establishment suitable to her rank? The minister, with visible reluctance, rose to declare that he declined giving any answer—that it was unbecoming to put such questions. The Prince was "the father of his family," and was "affected with great tenderness and love towards his child," had adopted measures for her

was read to the Duke, and accepted. A point is made that Lord Cochrane's election did not take place until some days later. Lord Cochrane himself says that it took place on that day, and this is urged as proof that the scene was only engendered in Lord Brougham's imagination. In any case it is evident that, as an election was going on, the nomination having taken place on the day before, and the polling to come on later, he wished to impress on the Princess that the neighbourhood was in a state of excitement which would be inflamed by the incident.

* See also the Duke of Sussex's account, "Memoir of Adolphus," p. 175. We cannot accept the fanciful theory of "The Edinburgh Review" that all felt that a night passed under her mother's roof, whither "the Sapios" resorted, etc., would have been contamination. It was obviously felt that, if she returned, the matter was merely a visit; but if she slept there, it became a refuge, and the Rubicon had been, as it were, passed.

good, "agreeably to the duties which God, nature, and the laws of the country imposed upon him." After this pretty picture, the Duke vindicated himself from any disrespect, but the Chancellor treated him in rather a severe style, and gave him a good lecture on his behaviour. It was said that a sudden "fit of asthma" furnished him with a convenient excuse for withdrawing from the business.

He had previously sent a letter to Lord Liverpool, asking to be allowed to see his niece, and received for an answer: "The Regent has read the letter, and has no commands." Mr. Brougham, excited by the contest, was prompting other friends, trying to stir up Lord Grey, the Princess's friend, declaring that he was sure she was "game," and would go to the Tower if necessary. One of his schemes was "to set Peter Plymley on them," and if he failed, to get the Princess herself to ask him to write in her cause. But Lord Grey felt that such a struggle between her relations carried on in public was unbecoming, and likely to cause mischief. He and Lord Grenville strongly opposed the matter being renewed.

Meanwhile the young Princess's allowances had been formally cut off. She was obliged to sell some of her jewels to pay tradesmen distressed for their money, with certain little pensions to the poor. She was also forced to admit one of her ladies to sleep in the same room or in the next, the door being left open. All her letters and parcels were searched. Her friends had taken care to publish the opinion of her three physicians, that she ought to be sent to the seaside, a step that caused "great anger" at Carlton House. Dr. Baillie interrogated Miss Knight in a manner "most unjustifiable," by order of the Prince. She was not allowed to go until the end of August. She also was put to the question as to whether she had set on her uncle to bring her case forward. Nor did the Regent want defenders; his hired writers in *The Post*, and others, presenting him as an injured father. "Aware of this unnatural rebellion," wrote the Rev. Bate Dudley, "the royal parent, as might be expected, became anxious to ascertain the description of persons by whom his daughter was immediately surrounded, and by means of one of the most pious and virtuous characters of the land, it was discovered that many of her associates were persons possessing pernicious sentiments, alike hostile to the peace of the daughter, the father, and the country. Under these circumstances the whole of the obnoxious associates were dismissed by order of the Regent." This gross attack upon ladies, who, at the worst, could have been only a little indiscreet, was characteristic of the press of the day.

After all this dissatisfaction and excitement it is not surprising to find that the Regent was now in a bad condition of health. He had organised a series of shows—his favourite pastime—to commemorate the peace, and vast sums of money had been laid out on these pageants. But his nerves were shaken by these agitations, and by the rough and hostile greetings which saluted him in public; and, indeed, it is not often that a prince is found who is engaged in a double contest with a wife and daughter, both of whom are popular. The old Queen was credited with the late proceedings, and was held in such detestation by the crowd that on coming from a party at Carlton House she was nearly mobbed. "The hooting, hissing, and abuse," says Lord Grey—"there was no form of reproach that did not assail her ears—was more violent and alarming than ever." Her son had to send his aide-de-camp to protect her; but the high-spirited old Queen disdainfully rejected all assistance, declaring that she had been nearly fifty years in the country, and had never been so insulted. "And now," she added grotesquely, "I be sphit upon!" Her situation was indeed pitiable—grown old, in ill-health, neglected; her husband, her family discordant; she must have looked back with despair to the old days—the walking on the terrace at Windsor with her husband in his blue uniform, surrounded by a dutiful family, and saluted by the respectful and affectionate homage of the crowd.

The shows consisted of galas in the parks, where the Regent was delighted to have an opportunity of erecting pagodas, temples, and bridges of an elaborate kind made of wood, to say nothing of ridiculous "sea fights" between tiny craft on the ornamental water.

But now the Regent was to receive an intimation of an unexpected kind, which must have rejoiced him. The object of his dislike was about to leave him in peace, disgusted and wearied out by the recent mortifications. The Princess of Wales sickened with the long struggle; finding, moreover, that her life was passing away in wretchedness and dulness, with no prospect of relief, determined to quit the country. Knowing that this step would be distasteful to her regular Radical advisers, she did not consult them, but invited the assistance of Mr. Canning and Mr. G. Leveson;* and employed the former to draw up a formal application to Lord Liverpool for permission to reside abroad. The ministry proposed to give her £50,000 a-year. Curious to say, the discussions which gave her the welcome annuity had brought out the unexpected fact that regular articles

* Brougham's "Autobiography," ii. 258. Mr. Grey Bennett also states this interference of Canning.

of separation had been signed in 1809, which settled on her an allowance of £17,000 a-year.

It was odd to find her friend Mr. Whitbread vehemently opposing the application, declaring that the Princess had never asked for any money, that the sum seemed too much. As the Princess quitted England within the month it was not unreasonable to suppose that this sudden liberality was in view of her departure from this country, which she had announced as early as the first week in June.* On the following day, worked on by Mr. Whitbread, who almost compelled her to follow his advice, she had written to the Speaker, declaring that she was unwilling to "burden the people" with so large a sum, and that £35,000 would be sufficient for her wants. The Government took no notice of this proposal till the 8th of the next month, when Lord Castlereagh hinted at its not being her own act, and said she herself had gladly accepted the money. He added, rather contemptuously, that he hoped capital would not be made out of this attempt at self-abnegation. But the reduced sum was finally voted.

An appeal to Mr. Brougham and Mr. Whitbread produced a solemn warning from the former, in which he declared that abroad she would be followed by spies, and exposed to all dangers from misrepresentations; whereas in England she was safe. He told her there were designs for divorcing her. He enjoined her to stay only a short time. In fact, he made a most remarkable prophecy of what actually was to occur; and it does appear as though he knew enough of her character and previous behaviour to be certain that what he prophesied would follow. That she accepted it in this offensive sense is evident from the extraordinary letter of complaint she wrote to Canning, begging that it should be shown to Lord Liverpool.

In the ministry, indeed, she had found this one friend, whose devotion to her, even through the later more critical events, was ready to stand the test of real sacrifices. Mr. Jerdan, who, from his connection with the newspapers, seems to have gained Mr. Canning's confidence, recounts the following odd scene, at which he assisted, and which shows the romantic character of the minister's feelings:

"On going to Gloucester Lodge on a Sunday afternoon, as customary, I observed the Princess's carriage at the door; and was hesitating whether I should go in or not, when Mr. Canning led her out and handed her to her seat, beckoning me to enter by another passage. A glance informed me that something of unusual interest had taken place, for the Princess appeared

* "Diary of Lady C. Campbell," i. 329.

flushed to crimson, and Mr. Canning exceedingly moved. I proceeded into the room, and walking up to the fireplace, stood leaning my arm on the chimney-piece, when the latter returned in a state of extreme excitement and agitation, exclaiming (in a manner more resembling a stage effect than a transaction in real life): 'Take care, sir, what you do! Your arm is bathing in the tears of a Princess!' I immediately perceived that this was the truth."

The Princess was determined, she said, to return at once should she hear of "any alarming reports." But go she would. "Nothing can stop her," wrote one of her ladies. This was in truth the fixity of purpose of a weak mind. The moment of departure was singularly ill-chosen. She was deserting her daughter, whose battle had been fought in her interest, and was sorely distressed at the idea, and who at the time was writing eagerly to be allowed to see her. And it will be found that this desertion effectually chilled the devotion of the child. It is not unlikely that this expedition was really promoted by a passionate longing for freedom, and for enjoyment after nearly twenty years of life under a ban. The mother and her child were to have one last interview, and never to see each other again.

On August 2nd, the Princess of Wales arrived at Worthing, expecting to go on board the Jason frigate, which, however, had not arrived. Crowds assembled on the beach and followed her as she walked; and when she went to Lancing, a couple of miles away, the whole town followed. There they saw her embark, attended by Lady Charlotte Lindsay, and the boy, "young Mr. Austin." It is recorded that she wore a dark pelisse and a "hussar cap" of velvet and green satin, after the Prussian fashion, with a green feather. A more melodramatic element was noted, viz., a mysterious "large, long case, with these words painted in white letters: 'Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, to be always with her.'"

She wept as the Jason frigate sailed away. She passed by the Texel on her husband's birthday; always good in impulse the poor exile drank his health and happiness in a bumper. She travelled under the name of Countess of Wolfenbüttel. A curious story was printed, which is likely enough to have been true, that during the course of her travels she contrived to see Prince Leopold, and handed him a letter from her daughter.*

In this fashion she set out on this most fatal—as it was to prove—pilgrimage. She had really handed herself over to her enemies.

* "Life of Princess Charlotte," i. 234.

Few characters have been more perplexing than that of the Princess of Wales. That she was good-natured, good-hearted, clever, lively, there can be no doubt, but all was mixed with a reckless *gamin* element. Had she been controlled by a sensible man of the world, she might probably have lived a reputable ordinary life. If we only think of what would be the effect of what is called "taboo" upon any lively high-spirited person of our acquaintance, with a powerful faction on the watch to destroy her, it will be felt at once how this hunted pariah state of life will operate for the worse. It seems analogous to the case of the enlarged prisoner wishing to reform and live honestly, but harassed and hindered in every effort by police espionage. The result is a life of desperate defiance, and of final indifference. Nor was her life free from pecuniary cares.

She was often reduced to strange shifts for money, at one time trying to raise some thousands on the lease of her house at Blackheath, now sending one of her ladies to sell "two enormous unset diamonds;" borrowing from friends and from her bankers—who at last refused to allow her to overdraw to a very small amount, it was believed, owing to instigation. Great allowance, therefore, should be made for the effect on her character of innumerable petty persecutions of this kind.

Her best vindication is the respectable circle of friends and families she surrounded herself with for the fifteen or twenty years of her life in England. This circle was more respectable than what her consort affected. When Lady Charlotte Lindsay was taking service with her, a friend, who knew the Princess, gave her the highest testimony. Indeed the choice of two of her ladies showed a sagacity on the one side and a faith and appreciation on the other highly significant. These were Lady Anne Hamilton and Lady Charlotte Lindsay, whose faithful service was her best testimony. As is well known, the latter was one of the brilliant and admired sisters who left such an impression on all who knew them, and which included Lady Glenbervie and Lady Sheffield. The wit of Lady C. Lindsay had a flavour that delighted her friends, of which Sir H. Holland gives a pleasant specimen. "It was of the copious library of Lord Guildford," he says, "that his sister, Lady C. Lindsay, used to say, and not without some justification, 'Frederick's library contains but two sorts of books—books that cannot be read, and books that ought not to be read.' Her playful letters were wrongfully obtained, and wrongfully used in the Queen's trial in 1821."

Of her, Lord Houghton, in his pleasing "Monographs," gives an interesting graphic sketch, describing how, when she said

a good thing, "her features crumpled into an expression of irresistible good humour.*

Her steady support of her mistress, and her gallant bearing as a witness during her trial, are well known.

Yet the Princess found herself bored with the grave manners of Lady Anne Hamilton, whom she had dubbed "Joan of Arc;" and over whom indeed she used to make merry with her correspondents. "My *dragonne de vertu*," she would write, "has been sick for some days, so I am in the utmost danger of being run away with by some of the enchanters who come to relieve locked-up princesses. No hopes of getting the *dragonne* married; no one will venture to espouse 'Joan of Arc.' Dey are all afraid of de Amazon, and I am not much surprised."

Lord Byron is well presented in another of these light sketches: "My better half, or my worse, which you choose, has been ill, I hear; but nothing to make me hope or fear. Pray burn this piece of high treason, my dear ——. Lord Byron did inquire for you also, I must not forget to mention. He was all *couleur de rose* last evening, and was very pleasant; he sat beside me at supper, and we were very merry. He is quite anoder man when he is wid people he like, and who like him, than he is when he is wid oders who do not please him so well. I always tell him there are two Lord Byrons, and when I invite him, I say, 'I ask the agreeable lord, not the disagreeable one.' He take my *plaisanterie* all in good part, and I flatter myself I am rather a favourite with this great bard."

"To tell you God's truth," she would exclaim in her grotesque phrase, "to tell you God's truth, I have had as many vexations as most people; but we must make up vons mind to enjoy de good, spite of de bad; and I mind now de last no more dan dat," snapping her fingers.

Nor must we omit noticing here a person of mark, who, though connected with her retinue but for a year, achieved a high and unique reputation. This was Dr. Holland, later better known as Sir Henry Holland, and son-in-law of Sydney Smith, one of the cultivated courtly physicians, whose gifts lay as much on advising adroitly on critical matters, in entertaining

* "She used to give an amusing account of her marriage, which took place in the drawing-room of her father's house. The clergyman brought no Prayer Book, thinking there would be no difficulty in supplying him with one, but no such article was forthcoming in the house; and the only way of getting over the difficulty was to perform the ceremony by memory. The clergyman, confused by the novelty of the situation, came frequently to a dead stop, and could only continue by the fragmentary reminiscences of the company. 'Somehow or other,' said Lady Charlotte, 'I do not think I was ever rightly married at all.'"—"Monographs."

causerie, as in physic. Among these eminent persons may be included Sir Henry Halford, confidential adviser of the Queen and Princesses; Sir Walter Farquhar, equally acceptable to the Regent as to the Princess of Wales; and Sir Henry Holland. Sir William Knighton, though more confidentially employed, was of lower type, while the Willises, Baillies, Tierneys, etc., were merely of the average class. In our day this type of Court physician is not found existing. When the Princess was preparing to leave England, Sir W. Gell brought her this young physician, who was found to have "a good countenance and pleasing manners," and also "appeared clever." He was, in truth, more than this, a young man of singular discretion and capacity, and, fifty years later, was enjoying the highest esteem in London society for his singular tact and charm of manner, as well as for his ability as a physician. He became not only the beau-ideal of the "fashionable physician," but the agreeable friend and talker, who had met at some time of his life almost every remarkable personage of his day. Indeed Sir Henry Holland and his life are well-nigh unique; and his amiable power of attaching old friends, and his facile charm of attracting new ones, seem to have been only rivalled by another man of society, the late Mr. Ticknor. He was born in 1788, and lived to write, in his eighty-fourth year, a most interesting volume of "Recollections." A little before he had made his eighth voyage across the Atlantic—full of the undiminished ardour for travelling which had led him to explore Iceland, the East, and every country where men of science offered attractions; among his patients he could count no less than six prime ministers, and almost every statesman of note. He had attended Ibrahim Pasha, and had stood by the bed of Princess Charlotte. He was consulted in 1819 by Dr. Antommarchi, then on his way to St. Helena to attend the first Napoleon; and, in 1831, had been hurriedly summoned to Holles Street, where he found Queen Hortense "hanging over the bed of her son," Louis Napoleon, then in a gastric fever. With the same remarkable man he was dining a few days before the Boulogne attempt; and on him he waited in his days of dethronement and exile at Chislehurst. He had known Madame D'Arblay, Mrs. Piozzi, and Lord Stowell, Wedgewood, and Mrs. Barbauld; had seen Murat and King Joachim at the head of his troops; had witnessed the bombardment of Cadiz by Soult; was with President Lincoln when the American Civil War was raging; had talked with Kellerman, and Maria Louisa, and Pope Pius VII.; was intimate with all the wits and literary men of his own and other countries; with Humboldt, Sismondi, Schlegel, Pozzo di Borgo, and Talleyrand;

during his long life, in short, had known all and everyone that was worth knowing. Yet with these opportunities he enjoined on himself a rare discretion, and on principle registered nothing of what he learned, destroying every letter that he received. He set out in life with a determination to economise his pleasures, to make every hour of his life available by system. There is something melancholy indeed in the tone of intellectual epicureanism which seems to have been the highest standard he set before himself. This self-restraint was, perhaps, the secret of his success; and it is singularly displayed in his reserve as to the proceedings of the Princess of Wales, of which he had full opportunities of judging. He notes as a curious coincidence that, on his return to England after leaving the Princess's service, he was called upon to attend Mrs. Fitzherbert. Such was this amiable and interesting man.

CHAPTER XIII.

1815—1816.

Thus delivered from the presence of one he detested, the Regent could scarcely restrain his impatience to take advantage of her absence, and commence operations for ridding himself of her altogether. Almost at once he pressed his Ministers to help him to a divorce. That this was seriously discussed at Carlton House and forced on their consideration, we are assured by Mr. Brougham.* With his usual capriciousness, he proposed turning them out and substituting more compliant agents.

The young Princess had now at last been sent to the sea—to Weymouth—where she soon recovered her health and spirits and began to enjoy herself a little. Here she pursued her studies and made sailing excursions; and many pleasant stories were told which delighted the public of her lively speeches and her spirit. The exciting crisis that led to the Battle of Waterloo was now drawing on. About a fortnight before that great event, we obtain a single glimpse of the poor outraged Mrs. Fitzherbert; the scene† was at a ball given by Lady Aylesbury. The Regent was present, arriving at one and remaining until two. She was there, and dreadfully overcome, for he took no notice of her. But now, the excitement connected with the great decisive victory was to be the one absorbing thought.

It is curious that with this event were to be associated two highly dramatic scenes, both taking place at a ball, both of which would be well worthy of the painter. That at the Duchess of

* "Autobiography," ii. 268, 279.
† Miss Knight, "Autobiography," ii. 67.

Richmond's ball, at Brussels, when the Duke gave orders for the advance, makes the pulses stir.

No less exciting was the night of Mrs. Boehm's ball in St. James's Square, where the Prince was when the news of the glorious victory reached London. On this entertainment no expense was spared. The Regent and his royal brothers had been entertained to dinner. "The first quadrille was being formed, and the Regent was walking up to the daïs, when," says an eye-witness, "I saw everyone, without the slightest sense of decorum, rushing to the windows, which had been left wide open because of the excessive sultriness of the weather. The music ceased, and the dance was stopped, for we heard nothing but the vociferous shouts of an enormous mob who had just entered the square, and were running by the side of a postchaise-and-four, out of whose windows were hanging three French eagles. In a second the door of the carriage was flung open, and without waiting for the steps to be let down, out sprang Henry Percy—such a dusty figure—with a flag in each hand, pushing aside everyone who happened to be in his way, dashing upstairs into the ball-room, stepping hastily up to the Regent, dropping on one knee, laying the flags at his feet, and pronouncing the words: 'Victory, sir! victory!' The Prince Regent, greatly overcome, went into an adjoining room to read the despatches; after which he returned, said a few words to his hostess, sent for his carriage, and left the house. The royal brothers soon followed, and in less than twenty minutes there was not a soul left in the ball-room but poor dear Mrs. Boehm and myself. Even the band had gone. The splendid supper which had been provided for our guests stood in the dining-room untouched. Ladies of the highest rank who had not ordered their carriages rushed away like maniacs in their muslins and satin shoes across the square, many jumping into the first hackney carriage they met." *

To these may be added some recollections of Lady Brownlow, who had joined Lady Castlereagh at the ball.

"The despatches were being then read in the next room to the Prince Regent, and we ladies remained silent, too anxious to talk, and longing to hear more. Lord Alvanley was the first gentleman who appeared, and he horrified us with the list of names of killed and wounded—great and distinguished in the campaigns of the Peninsula, and become almost household words. The Guards, he said, had suffered severely—my brother Ernest

* One of the last survivors who witnessed the scene of this night was the Prince de Ligne, who died in the year 1880, and was fond of recounting the event. Another survivor is Lord W. Lennox, whose account substantially agrees with the others.

was in them, but the fate of a subaltern could not be known! Presently the Prince came in, looking very sad, and he said, with much feeling, words to this effect: 'It is a glorious victory, and we must rejoice at it, but the loss of life has been fearful, and I have lost many friends;' and while he spoke the tears ran down his cheeks. He remained but a short time."*

There was now much discontent abroad, inflamed by the severe measures of the Government, chiefly prompted by Lord Sidmouth, who found in severity a supplement for his incapacity. A study of the "Doctor's" career is invaluable for such as would learn the secret by which mediocracy can rise.† The Regent, however, incurred the chief odium, and was daily scared by the frequent and alarming inscriptions on the walls of Carlton House:

"BREAD, OR THE REGENT'S HEAD!"

One morning a loaf, steeped in blood, was left on the parapet of Carlton House; yet it was stated that he was opposed to the Corn Bill which had excited this fury.

It was unfortunate that at a season of distress and hardship the question of the Regent's debts should have once more been brought forward. All the galas and entertainments given to the royal visitors had now to be paid for; and the vigilant and hostile Tierney had discovered that a sum of £100,000, granted by Mr. Perceval as an "outfit" on entering on the Regency, had been diverted to paying debts, while some new revelations as to fresh extravagance caused surprise and indignation.‡

Lord Castlereagh vindicated the Regent on the ground of the extraordinary expenses incurred for the entertainment of the sovereigns, and which, as was reasonable, should be charged to the nation. This amounted to the large sum of £32,000; but he owned that, on the three years, after every allowance, there had been an expense of nearly £100,000! The rest of his defence

* "A member of Major Percy's family," according to Miss Wynne, "says that Lord Liverpool brought Major Percy to Mrs. Boehm's ball. But in his own account Major Percy says he went first to the Prince Regent, as he would naturally, the despatches being addressed to him. But Miss Wynne states that the despatches were first opened by Lord Liverpool at Lord Hertford's, as she heard from General Alava."

† It is characteristic of that statesman that he should have assured his medical adviser, Sir H. Holland, that the all then critical and even perilous situations of his Government had never interfered with his night's rest!

‡ During three years it seems that a sum of £160,000 had been laid out on furniture for the insatiable Carlton House. The year before, glass and china had cost £12,000; "ormolu" nearly £3000; and to the silversmith in three years was owing a sum of no less than £130,000!

was of a fallacious kind; he admitted that the £100,000 had been diverted from the payment of the debts, but then the £60,000 a year set apart for clearing off the debts would be the sooner at the disposal of the public. This would be reasonable in the case of a sober person who was devoting his energies to the task of extricating himself, but was valueless when urged for a spendthrift not curtailing his extravagance. Then as to the furniture, which had cost £39,000, Lord Castlereagh gravely urged that £17,000 of it had gone for furnishing The Cottage at Windsor. Though called a cottage, he urged, because it happened to be thatched, it was still a very comfortable residence for a family, and the only one the Prince could make use of when he went to Windsor. He concluded with the extraordinary argument that the Prince, on entering on his Regency, might have sold all his own effects, and have called on the public to fit him out completely with plate, etc.! This provoked bitter and unanswerable retorts.

In this debate, too, it was remarkable that Mr. Ponsonby and other leading Liberals did not spare the Prince. The Government, however, defeated the attack. In a later debate Lord Castlereagh had to admit that the amount of his debts still left undischarged amounted to £339,000!*

We now return to the amiable young Princess, who had been brought back to Warwick House, the gate of which had been barred up, the only entrance being through Carlton House. She was in a very depressed state from this imprisonment, and her nerves quite shaken. Indeed she was in such terror of her father, that she could hardly speak in his presence: a sort of stuttering, which rarely affected her on other occasions, then coming on. It was stated that there was a project of providing her with yet another Prince of Orange, who was to be placed before her, "at a breakfast given specially by Lord Liverpool, and at which the Queen was to have been present." She declined to go. She could not write freely to her friends, and complained of "tricks being played with her letters." But it was evident that the advisers of her mother had soothed this impulsive young creature, as indeed kindness was always likely to do.†

As the year went by, a hope of release offered. The Regent's indifference would appear to have increased, and he began to look with favour on the idea of a new "candidature," that of Prince

* Huish, ii. 224.

† "Her own inclination," Miss Knight tells us, "was for an alliance with one of the Prussian Princes," and some months elapsed before she gave up this plan, which was opposed on both sides of the water.—"Autobiography," ii. 85.

Leopold. That sagacious young Prince, though he had received various hints from the young lady to return, had determined to wait for a fitting opportunity, and being resolved not to move unless the Regent invited him. So that the young Princess began impatiently to doubt whether he really cared for her. In the January of 1816, after she had completed her twentieth year, she was suddenly sent for from Brighton, to go with the Queen from Windsor; and was told that there was an agreeable surprise in store for her. Here she found her father, and the whole family seems to have been united for this occasion only, and the young girl, though still unwell, was at last allowed a little happiness and treated kindly.

Prince Leopold himself, when King of the Belgians, furnished Her Majesty with some recollections of this period, as his contribution to the "Early Years of the Prince Consort."

"It was in January, 1816, at Berlin, that Prince Leopold received the invitation of the Prince Regent to come to England. He was forced to wait for his brother's arrival from Vienna, and then left in fearfully cold weather for Coburg. He caught an inflammatory cold which retained him, to his great dismay, at Coburg, receiving the most pressing letters from England to hasten his arrival. It was painful to be quite unable to set out, and only in February could he leave Coburg. At Calais he was detained by stormy weather. In London he found Lord Castlereagh, with whom he went to Brighton, to be presented to the Prince Regent, who received him graciously.

"The arrangements were soon made, and on this occasion the young Princess met with no further difficulties."

The Regent is said to have proposed that £50,000 a-year should be settled on them, and he was to have the disposal of £40,000, to dole out as he pleased. The minister assured him that it was impossible to bring such a proposition before the House of Commons. The handsome sum of £60,000 a year was voted, with an outfit of £60,000, of which £10,000 was to be laid out in jewels, and £10,000 on clothes. Of the £60,000, a sum of £10,000 a year was settled to the Princess's sole and separate use. This liberality showed the feeling of the country.

The marriage took place on May the 2nd. The happy pair at first lived at Camelford House, Lord Grenville's mansion, close to Park Lane; but soon Claremont House was purchased, the Parliament again coming forward with a sum of £53,000 for the purpose. This they proposed to make their home.

All this must have offered disagreeable reflections to the Regent, who had received evidences of his own unpopularity. When the happy pair attended Covent Garden Theatre, to see a

farewell performance of Mrs. Siddons, the audience seized the opportunity to apply the various passages in Henry VIII. to the treatment of the Princess of Wales and her daughter—passages, too, which had a very awkward appropriateness. Nor could he have been gratified by contrasting the effusive address in which the City of London greeted the newly-married pair, with the one in which he himself was bluntly reminded of the extravagance of his rule, the "enormous sums paid for unmerited pensions and sinecures," "an unconstitutional and unnecessary military force in time of peace," "overwhelming taxation," "lavish expenditure," "all arising from the inadequate and corrupt state of the representation." The expressions of stern rebuke, and "the rude sulkiness of manner with which he replied to it, were ungracious and unwarrantable. In reading the answer, he pointed his resentment by emphasis, pauses, and frowns; and having concluded it he turned upon his heel, without allowing those whom he addressed the usual courtesy of kissing his hand." The Court of Common Council retaliated by recording the answer with a censure on the ministers. Nor was this all. In the House of Commons Mr. Brougham made an almost ferocious personal attack upon him, actually likening him to a Sardanapalus, and causing consternation in the Government. The Prime Minister wrote in agitation to the head of the State, who was at Brighton—unwell it seemed.

LORD LIVERPOOL TO SIR B. BLOOMFIELD.

[Secret.] "March 21st, 1816.

"Under these circumstances, both Lord Castlereagh and myself are of opinion that it is of the utmost importance that the Prince Regent should come to town the very first moment he can do it without risk. The country is indeed in a state in which his ministers ought to have the opportunity of daily, and even hourly, access to him. Decisions which ought not to be taken without his Royal Highness's concurrence must, at times like these, often be taken without the possibility of the delay which would arise in consequence of a communication between London and Brighton.

"In addition to these considerations, the Lord Chancellor has directed a search to be made, whether a recorder's report has ever been held out of London. We can find no instance of it, even in any period of the King's illness; and the Chancellor adds that he should be afraid to have execution done upon the authority of an unusual proceeding.

"I must beg of you to submit all these observations to his Royal Highness's most anxious consideration, and I am sure he will see

the necessity of coming to town as soon as he can bear the motion of a carriage."

THE PRINCE REGENT TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Pavilion, Brighton, March 24th, 1816.

"My dear Liverpool,

"I will not suffer Arbuthnot to return to you without being the bearer of a line in my own handwriting, briefly to thank you and your colleagues for all your principles, and firm and steady feelings towards me during the present storm which rages, and which I both hope and believe, ere it be very long, must and will subside, and you may depend upon my most resolute, firm, and persevering support to the very utmost. You have seen me before pretty highly tried, and you shall find me now, as at all other times, true to the backbone. Arbuthnot will enter into all other matters.

"Always most sincerely and affectionately yours,

"George P. R."

CHAPTER XIV.

1816.

To this uneasy life the *ménage* at Claremont—domestic and happy to an extraordinary degree—offered a remarkable contrast. It was almost pastoral in its happiness. In this establishment was a very remarkable man, the late Baron Stockmar, whom the Prince was fortunate enough to attach to him until his death; a type, however, that seems quite out of keeping with English character and habits. The influence of a series of Stockmars at Court, however wholesome in a moral point of view, would too much germanise it. The reports of this observer show that though viewing the mistress of the household with regard and indulgence, she hardly came up to the prim and precise German standard.*

This simple retired life affords one of the most interesting pictures of a happy wedded life that could be conceived. All the stories that come down to us are of the one texture, exhibiting her unbounded goodness of heart and a tender charity, and coloured by an engaging *bonhomie* that must have been irresistible. Now she is ordering 12,000 yards of silk for the furnishing of her house, for the benefit of the distressed Spitalfields weavers; now aiding the "suffering Irish;" now visiting the cottages and figuring in little domestic incidents with the rustics of the neighbourhood. She delighted in the place, busied herself with the gardens and the forming of the library, listened to her old preceptor's sermons, which she preferred to those of the local incumbent. She did not seem to care for the London gaieties, and but seldom came to town. Some festivities, however, drew them there, such as the marriage of the Duke of Gloucester, her

* See his "Memoirs," i. 41, 46.

old admirer and *prétendant*, who was accepted by his cousin, the Princess Mary. She was applied to to bring about a reconciliation between the Queen and the Duchess of Cumberland, who was still in disgrace; but, no doubt acting under the advice of her prudent husband, she declined to interfere. Happy as was this life, it was to last but a short time.

In the September of this year the Regent was taken dangerously ill at Hampton Court. His case was so serious that his death was hourly expected. But his wonderful constitution stood him in good stead, and before Christmas he was perfectly restored. It was wonderful how often he rallied from these attacks.

Meanwhile he did not regain the public favour, and made but few attempts to do so. Indeed, he was associated with a series of oppressive measures. When he proceeds to open Parliament in his state coach drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, it is significantly recorded that he was followed by an enormous detachment of Horse Guards. Parties of the same corps lined Parliament Street, for the purpose of preserving order; and it was remarked that they seemed entirely under the direction of the police of Westminster. Everywhere he is received in solemn silence, or with cries of disapprobation. When he went to church to receive the Sacrament he was hissed and groaned at, both going and coming. He was afraid of going in state through the streets as he should have done, but went in his private carriage through the park. But the mob found him out, and clung to the carriage-wheels, hissing, and the church (the Chapel Royal) was surrounded by soldiers.

About this time (on July, 1816), one of his oldest friends, and one too who had served him at the expense of reputation and interest—Sheridan—was allowed to die in poverty and neglect. This event took place on July 5, 1816. The Regent was under heavy obligations to him for his reckless sacrifice of character and desertion of friends to forward his interest, and serious charges of utter abandonment and forgetfulness have been made by Mr. Moore and others. After the failure at Stafford, the Prince Regent, says his biographer, "offered to bring him into Parliament; but the thought of returning to that scene of his triumphs and his freedom, with his royal owner's mark, as it were, upon him, was more than he could bear, and he declined the offer. Indeed, when we consider the public humiliations to which he would have been exposed between his ancient pledge to Whiggism and his attachment and gratitude to royalty, it is not wonderful that he should have preferred even the alternative of arrests and imprisonments to the risk of bringing upon his political name any further tarnish in such a struggle."

This bearing the "owner's mark" never at any time gave Sheridan compunction. It is hard to reconcile with this well-meant speculation of a poet the fact, that he actually accepted from the Prince a large sum of money to be used in finding a seat, and instead of so using it, as it was to be expected, devoted it to another purpose; and Mr. Croker, who was intimate with the King, declares that Sheridan's plea, that "he had permission from the lender to do so," is, he is sorry to say, entirely without foundation. It was noticed, indeed, he said, that he avoided every opportunity of approaching the Regent.* In his last stage of decay and illness, Mr. Vaughan, known as "Hat Vaughan," sent to say that he was entrusted by a mutual friend with a small sum of money, about £200 and more, for immediate comforts. It was returned by the family. Mr. Vaughan always gave out that this came from a royal hand. "But," says Mr. Moore, "this is hardly credible;" nor can he "suppose it possible that so scanty and reluctant a benefaction was the sole mark of attention accorded by a 'gracious Prince and master,' to the last death-bed wants of one of the most accomplished and faithful servants that royalty ever yet raised or ruined by its smiles."

"The whole truth of this story" (says Mr. Croker), has never as yet been told. The fact is, that Mr. Taylor Vaughan was requested, in the first instance, to be the bearer of £500 from Carlton House to Savile Row. He refused, saying that any such sum was altogether needless for the only purpose which any rational friend of Sheridan's could have in view at the moment, and he ultimately was persuaded with difficulty, to take even £200. How much of that sum he actually carried to Savile Row is uncertain—the business was left entirely to his discretion; but that he did carry a considerable part of it thither, and that that part, whatever it might be, was accepted there, on the instant, is certain. Some time elapsed before Mr. Vaughan returned to Colonel MacMahon with his £200, and told how the money had at first been received—how he had witnessed with his own eyes the beneficial effects of the application of that money—and how suspicions and pride having been afterwards awakened, money had by some means or other been raised by the family, and the debt that actually had been incurred extinguished by a repayment into his hands."

This has been made a party question to help the indictment of behaving treacherously to the Whigs. But the Regent seems

* The details are given in an evidently inspired article in "The Westminster Review."

to have met with ungenerous treatment in this instance, also, from his old friends.

The untimely fate, too, of another political character may be noted here—one of the champions of the Princess of Wales—thus deprived by violent means of two useful friends. The death of Mr. Whitbread by his own hand caused the deepest sorrow and contrition. By friends and opponents he was held in the highest esteem. His pleasant turning aside of the ill-mannered question of a county member, "were they to listen to such things from a brewer of bad beer?" and which, in the case of another less good-humoured, might have led to serious confusion, is admirable: "I rise, sir, as a tradesman, to protest against the imputation on the article which I sell!" For three weeks he had not slept.

In January, 1817, the Regent opened Parliament in person, and delivered a speech announcing fresh measures of severity, "with quiet spirit," as it appeared to the Speaker of the House.* It has been declared that on going to the House he had noticed the gathering mob, who, though silent, regarded him with sinister looks; and that this so unnerved him that he gave his speech in weak and faltering tones. But on his return he was greeted with abuse and violence. Stones were thrown at the carriage. The plate-glass window was found to be perforated in two places, and Lord James Murray, who was seated beside the Regent, declared his opinion that the holes must have been "made by an air-gun." This theory was received incredulously, as the two holes entailed the necessity of two such weapons. However, a message was sent to both Houses, declaring the existence of certain mysterious conspiracies. Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth once more appeared in their respective Houses, each with "a sealed green bag," announced to be filled with papers of the most alarming kind. Then followed suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and the reign of spies and informers set in, with the Castles, the Olivers, and Edmundes, and such beings.

The Regent's life, therefore, could not have been one of peace; and, indeed, a more judicious and popular ruler would have found his position one of painful difficulty. However, he consoled himself with festivities down at Brighton, and by the characteristic trait of changing his birthday, which was in future to be celebrated on St. George's Day, instead of on the 12th of August. It also occurred to him that the Queen's birthday might be celebrated with some state, and by way of earning a little public favour and gratifying his own sumptuous tastes, he required that all should attend the Court in dresses of English manufacture. "His Royal Highness ordered all his state

* Lloyd, "Life and Times of George IV.," iii. 144.

and household officers to wear costly dresses of home fabrication, and those dresses were directed to be made into three classes of uniform, according to the respective ranks of those officers. The first class consisted of suits for the Lord Chamberlain, the Lord Steward, and the Groom of the Stole. The coats were of dark purple, with crimson velvet collars, richly ornamented all over with gold. Not only those persons who were immediately under the command of the Prince Regent complied with this laudable direction of wearing British dresses, but great part of the nobility and gentry."

This matter of dress suggests another era in our Regent's career, namely, his adoption of the pleasant recreation of yachting. His vessel, *The Royal George*, was at Brighton, and on Monday, September 8th, 1817, he commenced a series of excursions, accompanied by his friends Nagle and Campbell, Lord W. Gordon, Sir W. Keppel, and Captain Paget. Accompanied by a squadron of war-ships he sailed out, when, we are told, "the ships went through all the manœuvres of an engagement. At night the vessels stood out to sea, and the next morning were off Dieppe; where, communication being had, the yacht and squadron crossed the Channel again, and reached Brighton on Saturday, when the Prince landed. On disembarking the Prince presented Captain Paget with a most elegant snuffbox, in testimony of his high gratification and esteem. So great, indeed, was the pleasure that his Royal Highness felt, that among other gracious intimations of attachment to the naval service, he said, that if he should land at any other place than Brighton he would wear the full-dress uniform of an admiral, and which he should continue to wear at his levees, alternately with the military dress. It was on this occasion that the present Marquis of Hertford, then Earl of Yarmouth, laid a wager with Sir Edward Nagle, that the Prince would not sleep one night at sea. By way of punishing him, the Prince remained out three or four nights. The terms were £100 for every night. Lord Yarmouth complained that he had not been fairly dealt with, and that the Prince ought not to have been made acquainted with the bet."

The Regent's connection with the exiled House of Stuart, slight as it is, is interesting and becomingly gracious. It is well known that on its becoming known to the good King George III. that Cardinal York had been despoiled of everything by the French, he conferred on him a pension of £4000 a-year, which was paid until his death. When the cardinal died, it was found that by his will he had bequeathed to the Prince Regent various jewels, including the star and jewels of the garter of James II., which had belonged to Charles I., and which many years later

the King presented to the Duke of Wellington; also a handsome ring said to be used by the kings of Scotland on being crowned. The cardinal, who died in 1807, allowed the Countess of Albany a pension of £800 a-year, which George III. doubled and continued until her death. He left behind him also a great store of family papers of much interest. A portion of these were seen by Sir J. Hippesley about 1794-5, and, as we learn from an interesting article in "The Quarterly Review," he "wrote to Mr. Burke, and by him the matter was brought under the notice of the Prince of Wales (George IV.). His Royal Highness took great interest in the papers, and authorised Sir John to treat for their purchase. This was effected in 1798, in consideration of an annuity of £50 to one Waters.

"Another mass of papers, of which the larger portion consisted of correspondence and documents regarding the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, belonged to Cardinal York, and remained after his death in the hands of his executor, Monsignor Angelo Cesarini. There happened in 1812 to be at Rome one Robert Watson, who had been compromised in London, first as private secretary to Lord George Gordon. He purchased these papers for about 20 guineas, and fitted up a room to receive them, there being several cart-loads."

Rome at that time, says another account, was full of English, and the imprudent collector could not help boasting to them of his purchase, and inviting them secretly to come and admire his treasure. The late Duchess of Devonshire having expressed a strong desire to see the collection, an evening was fixed for the gratification of her curiosity. A few select friends only were invited to examine the papers. In this number unfortunately happened to be the cardinal-secretary, who had been named one of the executors to the will of the late Cardinal York, and whose secretary, the Abbé Lupi, had, unknown to him, privately disposed of these papers to Dr. Walker, without being aware of their value, for the trifling sum of 300 crowns. The evening was spent in discussing the manuscripts; the cardinal contented himself with a cursory examination, and made no comments on the subject which could lead the company to suppose that he felt any particular interest about them.

On the following morning, Dr. Walker's apartment was invested by a detachment of the Papal Carabiniers, and an agent of the police placed a seal on all his papers, while two sentinels were left to keep guard at his door during the rest of the day. The result was, that the doctor was deprived of his manuscripts; he received back his purchase money, and when he exclaimed against the injustice of this proceeding, he was told he might

apply to the King of England, who was the rightful heir, and to whom they had been forwarded by the cardinal's orders.

This occurred in 1818. In 1816 Lord Castlereagh, explaining to the House that the cardinal had bequeathed the ornaments to the Regent in token of gratitude for the kindness shown him, added that a request had been made by the executors that the Prince would join them in erecting a monument. The Regent accordingly agreed, and the result is the poetical memorial—Canova's masterpiece in St. Peter's.*

* In this interesting episode may be added a curious story recorded by Miss Wynne. "*August*, 1844.—From Angharad Lloyd I have heard a story which is worth recording. Her sister, Helen Lloyd, was (through the interest of Lady Crewe, I believe) governess to the younger daughters of the Duke of Clarence. He, as was his custom, lived with her on terms of familiar intimacy and friendship from the time of her first presentation to the day of his death. He had expressed a strong preference for his second name of Henry, which he liked much better than that of William. The day after the death of George IV., Miss Helen Lloyd met the King at the house of Lady Sophia Sydney; she asked him familiarly whether he was to be proclaimed as King William or as King Henry. 'Helen Lloyd,' he replied, 'that question has been discussed in the Privy Council, and it has been decided in favour of King William.' He added, that the decision had been mainly influenced by the idea of an old prophecy of which he had never heard before, nor had he any evidence that it had ever been made. The drift of the prophecy was, that as Henry VIII. 'had pulled down monks and cells, Henry IX. would pull down bishops and bells.'"

CHAPTER XV.

1817.

Through all these distractions the Regent had one settled object in view—that of releasing himself from his wife. Almost from the date of her departure rumours concerning that indiscreet lady periodically reached England—strange stories of levity and questionable adventures, which must have gladdened her enemies. Already letters from private persons were reporting eccentricities, and even her own attendants were beginning to look grave.

She had gone to Brunswick, taking with her a suite composed of Lady Charlotte Lindsay and Lady Elizabeth Forbes, as maids of honour; Sir William Gell, Messrs. Keppel Craven, and St. Leger, as chamberlains; Captain Hesse, as equerry; Dr. Holland, as physician; with Siccard, as major domo. These were all persons of position and respectability. The boy "Wilkin" was also with the party.

Sir W. Gell, a man of extraordinary gifts, was of a type that now seems nearly extinct, in whom, as the author of "Monographs" says, are combined "the pleasant play of intellect on trivial subjects with sound scholastic knowledge." This feeling arises as we peruse his letters, "glowing with fun and rampant with nonsense," full of wit and a delightful *persiflage*. Even in his old age his letters to Lady Blessington reveal a charming buoyancy. When in the service of the Queen, however, he could not resist sarcastic sketchings of her foibles, to which she left him too many ridiculous openings; but on the main point, when her interest was at stake, he was staunch. Mr. Keppel Craven—also an antiquary—had the same lively vein, and took the same sarcastic view of his mistress.

She first repaired to Brunswick to see her brother, to whom she imprudently lent a sum of £15,000 on a bond, which she afterwards attempted to enforce in an English court, but where it was received with suspicion, and treated as a forgery.

Dr. Holland was always reticent on the subject of the journey, merely giving an outline of the route and a sketch of the persons and places they visited. Even their setting out had a grotesque air: "An old London and Dover mail coach had been purchased for the conveyance of some of the servants and baggage of the Princess. It was a whimsical sight this coach offered when scaling the Simplon, with all the old English designations still upon its panels. Arrived at Naples, King Joachim admired and purchased it; but his dethronement soon afterwards ended also the career of the Dover mail in Italy."

There was much that was dramatic in the scenes they witnessed. Writes one observer: "What was my horror when I beheld the poor Princess enter, dressed *en Vénus*, or rather not dressed further than the waist. I was, as she used to say herself, 'all over shock.' A more injudicious choice of costume could not be adopted; and when she began to waltz, the *terræ motus* was dreadful. Waltz she did, however, the whole night with pertinacious obstinacy; and amongst others whom she honoured with her hand upon this occasion was Sismondi. These two large figures turning round together were quite miraculous. As I really entertained a friendship for the Princess, I was unfeignedly grieved to see her make herself so utterly ridiculous."

Already one of her suite began to have forebodings. "As to her mode of proceeding (as I am really her friend), it distressed me greatly. She was dressed most injudiciously. The natives were, as she would have expressed it, 'all over shock.' The suite who travel with her declare openly they fear they shall not be able to go on with her; not so much from wrong doings as from ridiculous ones. When the party were at Berne, the *ci-devant* Empress Marie Louise was there, and invited the whole party to dinner. Accordingly they went, and were received in great state. To sum up the whole of that extraordinary meeting, the Princess and Marie Louise sang a duet together! The Princess seems satisfied with nothing, and has a spirit of restlessness in her which belongs to the unhappy and unprincipled. Whilst she sojourned at Geneva, letters came to her Royal Highness, recommending her, in the strongest terms, not to go to Naples. On that occasion Maria Louisa's manner," says Dr. Holland, "was quiet and pleasing, without any other marked character. Of the great

captive then at Elba not a syllable, as far as I know, was uttered —a silence which told far more than any speech could have done."

These scenes show her to be, as she will be found all through her travels, foolish and reckless, and, like Yorick, "without one ounce of ballast." She then passed on to Rome, where she was presented to the Pope, and by October was at Milan. Of Naples at this time her physician gives the following dramatic picture:

"We reached Naples early in November, King Joachim meeting the Princess at Aversa, and bringing her to his capital with much military show. Policy blended itself here with the love of pomp and display innate in his temperament. It was a time of continuous fête and revelry—of balls, masquerades, and operas; of levees, processions, and military reviews; of boar-hunts and fishing parties, and numerous other festivities by land and sea. In all these Murat himself was the conspicuous figure, and well pleased to be so. Tall and masculine in person; his features well formed, but expressing little beyond good nature and a rude energy and consciousness of physical power; his black hair flowing in curls over his shoulders; his hat gorgeous with plumes; his whole dress carrying an air of masquerade. This was the general aspect of the man.

"His queen, the sister of Napoleon, required and deserved more study. Under her fine and feminine features lay a depth of thought, at this time, as it seemed to me, verging upon melancholy.

"At a ball there was a sudden and startling wind-up. Everything went on according to the wonted fashion of such festivities until about eleven o'clock, the King and Queen, with the principal persons of their Court, being at that moment engaged in the figures of an English country dance. Count Mosburg, our host, was suddenly summoned out of the room. He speedily returned, went up to the King, and whispered intelligence to him, which he instantly communicated in similar way to the Queen. They both disappeared from the dance, and the assembly itself was at once dissolved, each guest carrying away some dim surmise of what had happened. The intelligence, in fact, was the escape of Napoleon from Elba."

At this place the Princess was beginning to feel the effects of her lavish outlay, having already spent £4,000 on the journey. Within fourteen months she was deserted by her English suite on various excuses, some, no doubt, genuine; but the fact had a damaging effect in England. She complained of this treatment of her, saying they were "perfect tyrants, and not suited to do the honours of an English Court. Lady E. Forbes "desired

to see her sister in England;" Mr. Craven had to go and "see his mother," the Margravine; Sir W. Gell urged his gout; and Captain Hesse wished to join his regiment. The Princess then pressed Mr. St. Leger to be her chamberlain, but he pleaded ill-health; and she offered places to Sir Humphrey Davy and his wife, who refused. Indeed, all began to see that it was a service of danger to stay with her, and that her indiscretion would be likely to compromise them. Already it was known that spies were watching her, and this system operated on her mind, and was magnified by her, which almost seemed a beginning of lunacy. Yet it will be seen that a woman in such a situation, deserted and spied on, might grow reckless; and, despairing of protection, defiantly furnish her enemies with real ground for their attack.*

After the escape of Napoleon, she had been hurrying through Italy, and went on board an English man-of-war, commanded by Captain Pechell. Of the espionage there could be no doubt. At one time a Mr. Quentin arrived at Naples, and gave as an excuse that "he had come to buy horses for the Regent." A more scandalous discovery, however, was made in reference to Baron Ompteda, the Hanoverian minister, who had been tampering with her servants. He succeeded with a German named Crede, who afterward confessed to the fact. The baron, however, was ordered away from the town by the police.

Thus abandoned by the English, she naturally fell into the hands of foreigners and adventurers. And, within a short time, we find the notorious and "bewhiskered" Bartolomeo Bergami installed. It is something in her favour that this unlucky influence was not that of an individual but of a whole family, consisting of Bergami himself; his sister, the "Countess Oldi;" one Louis Bergami, major domo; and Vallotti Bergami, comptroller. The head of the house was soon promoted to be chamberlain, being solemnly invested with a gold badge, and allowed to dine with his royal mistress. These creatures flattered her weaknesses, imparted the sympathy which she wanted, and, being adroit Italians, kept her in their hands.

Now followed the singular travels to Jerusalem, where she founded an "Order of St. Caroline,"† of which she made the Chamberlain Grand Master, the adoption of a child of his, and

* Most of the details are from Lady C. Campbell's well-known diary. They may be relied on, though assailed by Mr. Croker and others, and have been confirmed in their accuracy by the "Memoirs of Lord Brougham," and other writers.

† The diploma of this Order, conferred upon Lieut. Hownham, surely betokens something like lunacy:

"By this present (given at Jerusalem, 12th July, 1816) subscribed by

her attempt to get him received on a proper footing on board the *Clorinda*, during her second voyage. These seem the follies of a woman a little disturbed in her brain.

The cavalcade, which a traveller encountered on his road, was of a grotesque kind, and did not promise well: "At a small place called Borgo St. Domino, three days' journey from hence, what was my surprise to come up to a whole rabble rout belonging to the Princess of Wales. This consisted of twenty-four persons in all. There were seven piebald horses, and two little cream-coloured ponies; and two very fine horses that drew a chariot, which was entirely covered up. They were evidently a low set of people. Many of the women were dressed up like itinerant show players, and altogether looked quite unfit to be her attendants. I did not see any person that I mistook for a gentleman; but my maids told me that they saw several men dressed in uniforms and swords, who looked like pages."

She now took up her residence in a villa, called Villa d'Este, and began to sign herself Caroline d'Este.

"There was a *fête champêtre* at the Villa d'Este a short time ago," writes the lively Gell, "of which I dare say you have heard all the particulars. Mrs. Thompson," so he styled the Princess, must have looked divine as a Druidical priestess, which was the character 'we' assumed! and Le Comte Alexander Hector von der Otto figured charmingly as a god, to whom all the priests and priestesses did homage. Willikin was the victim offered to his druidical majesty. The Count Alexander generally wears the insignia of the Most Holy Order of Saint Caroline, which consists of a cross and a heart tied together with a true lover's knot, and the English royal motto encircling the badge: '*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*' How far these words are applicable to the case I cannot say; far be it from me not to take them in the sense they are intended to convey.

"'We' go constantly on the lake in 'our' barge, and are serenaded, and are, as we say, very happy; but of that I have my doubts. To be serious, I am truly sorry for Mrs. Thompson."

Her proceedings, however, on board the two men-of-war in which she had taken passage at various times, were really what

her own hand, her Royal Highness institutes and creates a new Order, to recompense her faithful knights who have had the honour of accompanying her pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

"2nd. That Colonel B. Bergami, Baron of Fracina, Knight of Malta, and of the Holy Sepulchre, shall be Grand Master of this Order; and his children, males as well as females, shall succeed him, and shall have the honour to wear the same Order from generation, for ever."

"Billy Austin" received the same privilege.

brought matters to a crisis. Captain Briggs, of the *Leviathan*, and Captain Pechell, of the *Clorinda*, reported what they saw.*

On the whole, therefore, it is not surprising to find the Regent calling his counsellors to his aid to consider the situation.

THE PRINCE REGENT TO LORD ELDON.

"Brighton, Pavilion, April 2nd, 1817.

"My dear Friend,

"When last I had the pleasure of seeing you, you left me not without the hope that I might possibly see you here for a day or two, your old friend Smith having given up his house in the country: but now something has occurred and has reached me, which presses much upon my mind, which I am extremely desirous of imparting to you, and of having a most confidential conversation with you upon; wherefore I must and do most earnestly desire of you to come here the earliest day that you can possibly do so; and when you may find it least inconvenient either to your business or yourself.

"Always, my dear Lord,

"Your very affectionate Friend,

"George P. R.

"P.S.—I will be much obliged to you, if you will send me a line by return of post, to say when I may expect you."

THE SAME.

"Pavilion, Brighton, April 18th, 1817.

"My dear Lord,

"I have just received your note conveying the melancholy tidings of the death of that most excellent and worthy man, Sir A^r. Thompson, and whose loss is certainly a very severe blow to the Bench, however great may be the abilities of that person who will have to succeed him in the high office which he filled with so much respectability and eminence. Any recommendation from you, you may be certain, my dear friend, ever will and must meet with my entire concurrence and approbation, and therefore I authorise you to acquaint Mr. Baron Richards, as soon

* Captain Pechell entreated her Majesty, that if she condescended to come on board his ship, she would spare him the disgrace of sitting at table with a menial servant.

as you may choose to do so, of your having received my sanction to his nomination upon the present vacancy.

"Believe me always,

"Very affectionately yours,

"GEORGE P. R."

THE SAME.

"Carlton House, May 2nd, 1817.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have only just now received your note, and which I lose not a moment in replying to. In a former answer of mine to you, upon a similar application, I already assured you that any recommendation proceeding from you could hardly ever fail of meeting with my fullest approbation and sanction, and I am therefore particularly happy, upon this occasion also, to afford you a further proof of my highest esteem and most affectionate regard, in signifying to you my thorough acquiescence in the arrangement you have proposed, of placing Mr. Attorney-General, Sir William Garrow, in the Court of Exchequer, in succession to the present Lord Chief Baron, Sir Richard Richards. After having said thus much, I cannot resist adding one short word more, and which is this—expressing my earnest desire and hope to you that you will suffer as little time as possible further to elapse before you nominate the Attorney-General's successor (which, I trust, will be our present most admirable Solicitor-General), and if so, his successor also; for I am sure that if there is much, or indeed even any, delay in these nominations, after the appointment of Sir William Garrow is known to the public, there will be no end or measurement to the plague you and I shall both of us experience from the various applications we shall receive, arising out of the numberless (and, in most instances) most extravagant and absurd pretensions of different individuals. Forgive me also, my dear friend, if I add and bring to your recollection (and I can hardly do so without its forcing at the same time a smile on my countenance), that a snail's gallop is but a bad thing, and a very poor pace at best, in most of the occurrences of life, and I am sure that you would particularly find it such in the present.

"I remain, my dear Lord, always

"Your very affectionate Friend,

"GEORGE P. R.

"P.S.—I shall expect to see you as usual on Sunday morning."

Enough had now been done to attract attention at home, whither we shall now turn our eyes to notice a gathering at Brighton, to which all the members of the royal family were bidden. The town was pleased and rather puzzled at this descent, which was believed to be connected with the nefarious steps that were being planned against the Princess,* and to lay before the family, in council, what description of person she was. Connected, no doubt, with the same matter were certain letters, written in the favourite style of the Regent, and addressed to the Chancellor. These consultations boded ill for the Princess, and, it is stated, were prompted chiefly by the reports sent home by Captain Pechell to the Admiralty.

* Some servants of one of her attendants met the Duke of Cumberland's servants at Brussels, and reported strange tales of her behaviour. These the Duke carried to London, and it is said that Lord Charles Stuart was despatched to Milan to inquire.

CHAPTER XVI.

1817.

Amid all these ominous portents and gatherings of enemies one remained faithful—her true-hearted daughter. She was much distressed at her mother's behaviour, but they could not turn her against her. She was now on the eve of her confinement, and, as it proved, on the eve of her death, and almost her last act was to write the following to Lady Charlotte Lindsay :

"The only person now remaining with my mother, and who, I trust, will take courage and continue with her, is Dr. Holland, who, I believe, from everything I have heard of him, is a most respectable and respected character. I have it not in my power at present to repay any services shown the Princess of Wales, but if I ever have, those who remain steadfast to her shall not be forgotten by me, though I fear sensible people like him never depend much on any promises from anyone, still less from a royal person; so I refrain from making professions of gratitude, but I do not feel them the less towards all those who show her kindness.

"I have not heard from my mother for a long time. If you can give me any intelligence of her, I should be much obliged to you to do so. I am daily expecting to be confined, so you may imagine I am not very comfortable. If ever you think of me, dear ———, do not imagine that I am only a princess, but remember me, with Leopold's kind compliments, as your sincere friend,

"Charlotte Pss. of S. Coburg."

But, as we have seen, the excellent and agreeable Holland had been already compelled to leave her.

The sad event which may be said to have affected the English nation more genuinely than any modern event was now impending. Knowing that the people of London wished to see more of her, the young Princess now determined to come to town, and Marlborough House was to have been her residence. She was full of happiness and enjoyment, looking forward to more.

Some were anxious that she should come to town for "the event," but she preferred to stay at Claremont. Physicians were engaged—Sir Richard Croft and Dr. Baillie; both men of eminence. The former was a well-known fashionable *accoucheur*, and his brother, Sir Herbert Croft, had assisted Johnson in his "Lives of the Poets," and written a strange book on Miss Ray's murder—"Love and Madness." These advisers came to stay at Claremont; but the *accouchement* was delayed beyond the time anticipated, so that they were detained in the house over three weeks, during which the amiable young Princess was as agreeable and pleasant as possible. It was noted that at times a strain of serious presentiment came over her.* Mr. Wilberforce heard that she said a few days before the event: "Certainly I am the happiest woman in the world. I have not a wish ungratified. Surely this is too much life to last."

On November 4th expresses were hastily despatched for the various great officers of state, and before night a crowd of bishops and ministers had arrived. The crisis seems to have been unexpectedly prolonged, and Croft, a nervous man, grew flurried. It was prolonged nearly the whole of the night and during the next day, the physician not interfering or aiding; until, at nine o'clock on the 5th, it was announced that the Princess "had been delivered of a still-born infant and was going on favourably."† When she was told of this result she took it calmly enough, but a crisis lasting fifty hours was considered a serious and exhausting one. Stockmar shall tell the rest.

"Baillie sent to say that he wished I would see the Princess. I hesitated, but at last I went with him. She was in a state of great suffering and disquiet from spasms in the chest and diffi-

* Prince Leopold had shown a praiseworthy eagerness on the subject of the baptism of his child, which he wished should be performed at once. Lord Liverpool, however, in an official strain, pointed out to him that it was against precedents.

† Lord Eldon says that Baillie thought so seriously of the situation that he declined signing the bulletin "favourably." But his name is attached to all the bulletins.

culty in breathing, tossed about incessantly from one side to the other, speaking now to Baillie, now to Croft. Baillie said to her, 'Here comes an old friend of yours.' She stretched out her left hand eagerly to me, and pressed mine twice vehemently. I felt her pulse, which was very quick; the beats now full, now weak, now intermittent. Baillie kept giving her wine constantly. She said to me, 'They have made me tipsy.' For about a quarter of an hour I went in and out of the room, then the rattle in the throat began. I had just left the room when she called out loudly, 'Stocky! Stocky!' I went back; she was quieter, but the rattle continued. She turned more than once over on her face, drew her legs up, and her hands grew cold. At two o'clock in the morning of November 6th, 1817—therefore about five hours after the birth of the child—she was no more."*

The shock of this intelligence may be conceived. The first duty was to communicate it to her father. The Regent was at this time down at his favourite, Lord Hertford's, in Suffolk, for a week's shooting, where he had received a letter from the physician saying, "that his daughter's recovery would be slow." He left suddenly and travelled all night.

"The Prince Regent arrived at Carlton House," Lord Bathurst wrote to Lord Liverpool, "at a little before four o'clock this morning, setting off as soon as he received the account that Dr. Sims had been sent for. He had missed the two last messengers. On finding that the Regent had arrived, I went with the Duke of York to Carlton House a little before seven, and having waked Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, we desired his royal highness should be immediately waked, and informed that we were waiting. On going up he asked most anxiously how things were going on. I told him at once that her royal highness had been seized in an alarming manner at half-past twelve at night; and, after a short pause, added that it was over at half-past two. He struck his two hands on his forehead, and bowed down, without saying a word, for a minute. He then held out his hand to me, and calling his brother, threw himself into his arms. He has really behaved in a most becoming manner."

He was so terribly affected, indeed, that he had to be cupped. But his feelings, for he had much sensibility, must have been mingled with some self-reproach for the many weary hours of torture and misery he had inflicted on the amiable young creature

* It will be noted that Stockmar is guarded in his account, and "hesitated," he says, "to come to the Princess." The truth was, as I have heard from a person to whom he related it, that he earnestly warned the physicians that the Princess was sinking, and had at last been repelled by Croft, "Are you or I, sir, in authority here?"

now lying dead. His first step to relieve these feelings was to offer the afflicted husband "an immediate asylum" at Carlton House, but his son-in-law naturally preferred his solitude.* The Regent found comfort in a long audience with Lord Sidmouth discussing the pomp and preparations necessary for the funeral. He, later, set off to join his mother and family and share their grief.*

All over the kingdom the effect was prodigious; many now can recall the profound grief, the universal wearing of the deepest black, the sermons in the churches, and the fresh tide of unpopularity that overwhelmed the luckless Regent. Strange ridiculous rumours of foul play got abroad, founded on the neglect with which a young creature had been treated, not one of the numerous royal matrons being with her. But this, it is probable, was owing to her own desire and the result of her rather self-willed independence. "The Regent being away, and all the females of the family," Mr. Brougham said, "gives great dissatisfaction." It was considered that her case had been mismanaged, and the hapless Croft was overwhelmed with attacks. It seems that some of his distinguished patients wrote to the physician declining his further services. The mind of the wretched man† at last gave way under the persecution, and he destroyed himself.

There was another person to whom it was proper that some pains should be taken to break the news—viz. the absent mother. The Regent and his ministers on such an occasion resolved to ignore her, and an undignified mode of shirking the difficulty was resolved upon. And Lord Liverpool wrote to Prince Leopold's equerry that he should undertake the task, as "some inconvenience might arise to the Regent after all that has passed, in renewing any channel of communication of this nature." On the other hand, it might give umbrage if no notice whatever was

* He narrowly escaped a "screed of doctrine" from Mr. Wilberforce; but the poor widower was not so fortunate. "I thought in the night of writing a letter to the Prince Regent, hoping to find his heart accessible, and put down some notes for it, but this day scarcely spent so profitably as Sundays should be. Sent off a suitable letter with my Practical View to Prince of Coburgh. May God prosper it."

† "He was in a state of great agitation," says Lord Sidmouth, "such as I never before witnessed."——"He was observed to be in a state of fever and excitement, so that he often lost all command of himself. Early in February he spent the night in the house of a lady, in order to attend her sister, the wife of a clergyman, in her confinement. As this was protracted, he became quite beside himself, and exclaimed, 'If you are anxious, what must I 'e?' During the night he shot himself with a pistol, which he found in the room he occupied. The clergyman's wife was safely confined." —Stockmar, i. 70.

taken of her royal highness after such a calamity. Such a communication from the husband to the mother, on the death of the child, would appear liable to no objection, and subject to no inconvenience. She was stated to have fainted on receiving it. In her odd English she wrote to Lady C. Campbell, on December the 3rd: "I have not only to lament an ever-beloved child, but one most warmly attached friend, and the only one I have had in England! But she is only gone before. I have her not *losset*, and I now trust we shall soon meet in a much better world than the present one." Her style of mourning was characteristic. "To my infinite surprise," as a visitor describes her, "her royal highness wrote, and desired me to wait upon her yesterday, which I did accordingly, and found her looking very well, but dressed in the oddest mourning I ever saw; a white gown, with bright lilac ribbons in a black crape cap!" But the poor soul might well become reckless now, for this was a fatal blow to her fortunes. She had lost not merely her only friend, but the only stake she had left. She had nothing now to offer to partisans, who might favour the mother for the sake of the daughter. Even those who were well disposed felt that she was now a ready prey to her enemies.

"Grey and I," says Lord Brougham with great sagacity, "in discussing the event, took somewhat different views. He held that death had mercifully saved Princess Charlotte from what would have been, to her, the fearful consequences of the disgraceful proceedings against her mother. I, on the other hand, felt persuaded that, had she lived, the proceedings of 1820 never would have seen the light. Even against her, standing alone, George IV. would scarcely have ventured to have instituted them; but against her, supported by Leopold, he would have found such a course impossible. For Leopold, of all men I have ever known, possessed every quality to ensure success against such a man as George IV., and even against such ministers as had weakly, if not dishonestly, done his bidding in 1820." This view commends itself.

A more serious view of the situation was that there were now only heirs-presumptive to the throne. The Duke of York was without children; the Duke of Cumberland had a son; the other royal brothers next in the succession were unmarried. With the new year the matter was seriously taken in hand in a thoroughly comprehensive fashion, and three of the royal brethren had selected wives.

CHAPTER XVII.

1819.

It may now be found interesting to consider the Regent's family. All through his career the figures of these personages stand out conspicuously; and at certain great solemnities he would appear attended by his six brothers and often by his sisters. Some, at least, were men of marked character, but for the most part with a certain eccentricity, which they shared with the Regent. In the case of the Dukes of Clarence and Cumberland this weakness seemed at times to be borrowed from that of their hapless father. The Duke of Kent was an amiable, if not feeble, being, who suffered all his life from grievances for which he had not weight of character to obtain redress. The Duke of Sussex was chiefly remarkable for his attachment to his Scotch fancy dress, and for taking the chair at charity dinners, and for his library, in which he gathered a vast number of rare Bibles. The Duke of Cambridge was scarcely considered. The majority of the brothers were perpetually before the public—their debts, escapades, and quarrels periodically engaging attention. It has been shown what a romance marked the youthful days of the Duke of Sussex, then Prince Edward. The heroine of that romance lived till 1830; when he contracted another private marriage with a subject.* This lady's position has been recognised, and she was created Duchess of Inverness in the present reign. His son by the first

* Cecilia-Lætitia Underwood, married May 14, 1815, Sir George Buggin, Knight, of Great Cumberland Place, who died April 2, 1825. She was daughter of Arthur Saunders, second Earl of Arran, K.P., by Elizabeth, his third wife, daughter of Richard Underwood, Esq., of Dublin, assumed the surname and arms of Underwood, March 2, 1834, and was elevated to the peerage April 10, 1840.

lady, Sir Augustus D'Este, gave King William much trouble owing to claims for recognition, while his sister, Mademoiselle D'Este, espoused the late Lord Truro. It is to the credit of the Duke of Sussex that he always maintained a manly independence, and did not scruple taking part with Queen Caroline and the Princess Charlotte against his royal brothers. Mr. Adolphus, who was in his company a good deal, gives a pleasing sketch of him in his velvet cap, with his meerschaum pipe, and indulging in gossip.

In the Duke of York, after all his defects, excesses, and scandals, is left a measure of worth and excellence which redeems much. When almost a youth he had commanded armies in the field. He had administered the affairs of the English army at home with a certain credit, setting aside, of course, the Clarke scandal. He had shown courage and spirit, according to the world's canons, in fighting a duel. He was a good speaker, and in the later days, was to do good service to the anti-Catholic party. Since his restoration to the command of the army, he had for some years ceased to attract attention by anything that could give public offence. Now indeed of an age when excesses and frivolities excite pity and contempt, he began to show his better qualities and even virtues—among which was the all-redeeming one of never forsaking a friend—with an unfailing good nature and good feeling rare in princes. He had also begun to devote himself to the duties of his office with a praiseworthy energy and ability which before his death left substantial results. Unfortunately, however, these merits were counterbalanced by a love of jovial society and a fatal passion for play, while the excitement of sitting up late was carried to a reckless regard for his health. This and other old extravagances had plunged him in debts beyond all hope of extrication, leading on occasions to painful pressure of embarrassment and processes to which vulgar beings are exposed. Mr. Greville, his friend and the manager of his racing establishment, describes some of these scenes with much particularity, sketching his hospitalities at Oatlands, and its eccentric hostess. Of a Saturday it was difficult to procure chaises at the White Horse Cellar, so many guests were going down from the clubs—the host himself only staying from Saturday till Monday. After dinner, the Duke would sit down to his favourite whist, whence he would never rise "so long as he found any one ready to play with him." During the latter two or three years of his life, from some dropsical affection, he got into the habit of sleeping in a chair, which really gave him no repose and added to his ailments. Mr. Greville gives the following character of him,

worthy of one of Sir Fretful Plagiary's "d——d good-natured friends:" "He is not clever, but he has a justness of understanding to avoid the errors into which most of his brothers have fallen. He is the only one of the Princes who has the feelings of an English gentleman; his amiable disposition and excellent temper have conciliated for him the esteem and regard of men of all parties, and he has endeared himself to his friends by the warmth and steadiness of his attachments, and from the implicit confidence they all have in his truth, straightforwardness, and sincerity. He delights in the society of men of the world, and in a life of gaiety and pleasure. He is very easily amused, and particularly with jokes full of coarseness and indelicacy; the men with whom he lives most are *très-polissons*, and *la polissonnerie* is the *ton* of his society." Such is the view of a man of the world and of a man of pleasure. The meaning of the whole is, in the eyes of more exact judges, that the Duke might be considered a good-natured voluptuary. If, however, we add another element, that he set up as champion of religion and the Church with a devotional *onction*, an unpleasing element is introduced, or at least a strange instance of self-delusion. Much, however, is redeemed by one touch: that he never would abuse an absent or a fallen friend, nor bear to hear him abused. With those who had offended him, he was always glad to be reconciled —a strange contrast to his eldest brother, who seemed to cherish rancour. It was also a peculiar quality in the Duke, as we have seen, that he never was known to desert an old friend.

Some significant stories, illustrating this regard of his friends for the Duke, as well as the relations of the royal family to each other, are recorded by Mr. Raikes. "Many years ago, Berkeley Craven and myself were sitting late after dinner at Brookes's, when the waiter came in and said that St. James's Palace was on fire. The Dukes of Cumberland, Cambridge, and Gloucester were running about in every direction encouraging the firemen, and were very conspicuous. I then remarked to Berkeley what a pity it was that the Duke of York, who lived in the Stable Yard, should not have been apprised of it, and thus be the only one of the royal family absent. We got into a hackney-coach, and drove to —— immediately. It was some time before we could get admittance; but on giving in our names the message was carried up, and in five minutes the Duke, evidently much alarmed, received us, asking what the devil could have brought us there? On stating the case, he entered immediately into our feelings; said he should never forget the obligation, and no other conveyance being at hand, got into the coach, and in half an hour afterwards was seen more prominent than anyone else

in extinguishing the flames." A little trait creditable to all concerned.

The Duchess seems to have been truly eccentric. Her curious taste was for keeping pets, whose graves were duly marked by tablets in enormous numbers. In an amusing passage, Mr. Raikes speaks of the "adroitness and tact with which she so successfully avoided any collision with the cabals and *tracasseries* which for so many years unfortunately ruled in various branches of the royal family;" and, her tact was attested by the fact that all the men of her "set" had the highest regard for her, and sent her little presents on anniversaries. This singular Princess died in 1820. Her letter to one of these friends, Lord Lauderdale, written a few days before her death, has all the intrepidness of the "woman of the world," or, as the dandy would say, *très-grande dame*.

"Mon cher Lord L.,

"Je fais mes paquets, je m'en vais incessamment. Soyez toujours persuadé de l'amitié que je vous porte.

"Votre affectionnée Amie,

"F."

"Among her own household," says a contemporary account, "not a servant was married without having a house furnished by her." Every charity in the neighbourhood was provided for.

Besides this, she had a long list of infirm pensioners, of both sexes, in London, who received regular allowances, some five, others ten, and some even twenty pounds a year. Nor let it be forgotten, that in all these exercises of humanity, the Duchess met with the full and cheerful concurrence of her royal consort, who was pleased, at her demise, to direct that all her charities should be regularly continued.

To dogs the Duchess was remarkably attached; and it was no uncommon thing to see her in the park surrounded by thirty or forty of these animals of various sorts, as English lapdogs, Dutch pugs, and French barbettes. "Their respective litters were taken great care of, and the young ones not unfrequently boarded out, under the superintendence of the cottagers."

The Duke of Cumberland has been described by Mr. Greville with a pitiless minuteness. His own brother gave him the character of delighting in setting husband and wife, lovers, brothers and sisters, parents and children, by the ears. His singular quarrel with Lord and Lady Lyndhurst is well known, and an excellent specimen of his temper. Strange mysterious stories were circulated, and the well-known midnight onslaught

of the valet, Sellis, was always associated by the public with some tale of mystery beyond.

The eccentricities of the Duke of Clarence are more familiar. His extraordinary attachments, his sea manners and rough phrases, made him a most singular person. For a period of nearly forty years his course was steadily marked by strange and eccentric behaviour, like that recorded by Miss Burney at the time of the King's first seizure. Such, too, are his attachments; his freaks as Lord High Admiral, described by the Duke of Wellington as "more expensive and foolish than in any way serviceable," and his early doings as King, described by Mr. Greville. The wonder was that such oddity did not break down the feeble barrier that divided it from madness. He was fond of offering his hand to young ladies, as he did in 1818 to Miss Wykeham, who accepted him. "The Prince," we are told, "accompanied by the Duchess of Gloucester, went to Windsor to inform the Queen of this happy event, who was of course outrageous. The Council have sat twice upon the business; and it is determined, as I understand, to oppose it. You may imagine the bustle it creates in the royal concerns. The Drawing Room, on Sunday, was put off; on Monday it was resumed. My own private belief is, that the Prince has been encouraging the Duke of Clarence to it, at Brighton, and now turns short round upon him, as is usual, finding it so highly objectionable. They talked, scolded, and threatened him out of his love-match." This large family of Princes and Princesses, their debts and increased allowances, were destined to be a serious drain on the resources of the country.*

The Princesses were all excellent, "well-brought-up" ladies. One of Gainsborough's most pleasing pictures represents three of them walking in the "Mall," with the crowd promenading, and, as may be conceived of such a painter, they are portrayed as elegant, graceful young women. They were brought up strictly under Madame La Fite, and there are still preserved many of their childish letters, written in the French tongue, and addressed to their *gouvernante*. One of these, of a penitential character, and written

* From a return made in the reign of George the Fourth, we find under the head of "Pensions to the Royal Family" the following sums: To the Duke of Clarence, £32,500; to the Duke of Cumberland, £27,000; to the Duke of Sussex, £21,000; to the Duke of Cambridge, £27,000; to the Duke of Gloucester, £14,000; to the Princess Sophia of Gloucester, £7,000; to the Duchess of Gloucester, £14,000; to the Princess Elizabeth of Hesse-Homburg, £14,000; to the Princess Augusta, £13,000; to the Princess Sophia, £13,000; to the Duchess of Kent, £12,000; to the Duchess of Clarence, £6,000; and to the Prince of Coburg, £50,000. Besides which, a sum of £171,000 had been distributed as presents among the royal family out of the "droits."

by the Princess Augusta when about ten years old, will be found interesting:

"Une pauvre méchante, nommée Auguste Sophie, qui est extremement fachée de la sotte manière dont elle s'est conduite envers sa bonne amie Madame de La Fite, la prie d'excuser son espièglerie, et ayant examiné avec attention sa conduite si sotte et si imprudente, elle est frappée de cette méchante, et prie très humblement sa bonne Madame de La Fite d'oublier ses sottises et de la croire sa toujours fidelle amie,

"Auguste Sophie."*

But the Princess Elizabeth, afterwards Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg, seems to have been a person of character, and was generally employed by her mother to write for her to the Chancellor and other officials. It will be recollected that the Prince of Wales, on entering on the regency, announced as part of his programme a generous increase—from the nation—to his sister's allowances. The following familiar letter shows with what fluttering eagerness the family turned towards him who was to be now virtually the new King:

PRINCESS ELIZABETH TO THE DUKE OF CLARENCE.

"March 25th, 1812.

"A thousand thanks for your most kind and entertaining letter, which amused us all not a little. My mother desires me to say on Saturday the man who is to take care of the Jerusalem ponies will be with you, and will stay till you order him back with the curls. Your very affectionate manner of expressing yourself on our business is most kind and like yourself. We only feel hurt that we should have been the innocent cause of anything being brought forward that must have been unpleasant to the P.R. It only makes us feel more strongly how much we owe him; and his whole conduct has been so delicate, so angelic, and so like himself, that I cannot say how penetrated I am with it. Was I to go on, I should never end, and having an abominable pen, I will not take up more of your precious time."†

The Princess Sophia survived until the year 1848. Her brother, the King of Hanover, outlived her by three years, and was the last survivor of the generation. The Prince's favourite sister was Charlotte, Princess Royal, married to the Duke (later

* Brit. Mus. Add. MSS. † Ibid.

King) of Wurtemburg. Her well-known resolute behaviour to Napoleon, under trying circumstances, helped to save her husband's kingdom, and won the praise of the despot himself. She exhibited as much tact as resolution.*

The Duke of Kent, an amiable suffering prince, was treated with much harshness by his father. Sunk in debt, he was at one time so indiscreet as to print a pamphlet, in which were set out his complaints. Yet he seems to have been fairly provided for, being colonel of a regiment at an early age, Governor of Gibraltar—whence he was recalled, owing to unpopularity from repressing abuses—Commander-in-Chief of the English forces in America, and finally Field-Marshal. His debts amounted in 1807 to the large sum of £108,000, owing, as he maintained, to his having received no allowance for his various "outfits." From that time he was always clamouring, or piteously appealing, for assistance to the Government; and a pamphlet was printed, if not published, declaring his grievances to the public, about the same time that the Duke of Sussex, who had his own hardships, was also consulting with Romilly on printing *his* grievances. The poor Duke of Kent, who had given bonds to his creditors which for many years he honourably acquitted, became at last so pressed for money that, when the time of the birth of an expected heir to the throne drew near, he had to appeal to a friend for cash to enable him to carry out his cherished and becoming wish that the future occupant of the throne should be born on English soil.†

No one, however, seemed to be much interested in his case. The fact was, the Duke had not been badly treated by the country. Besides his various appointments, he had received £12,000 a year, afterwards increased to £16,000; £26,000 was given him by Mr. Pitt, for payment of his debts, out of "Admiralty droits," and on his marriage £6000 a year was settled on him and his wife. But nothing seemed to help him, and we find him at last petitioning Parliament to allow him to dispose of his estate and effects by lottery. Always in opposition he could not expect assistance. Imitating the example of his eldest brother, he broke up his establishment, and retired to a modest house at Sidmouth, where her present Majesty, then an infant, had a narrow escape from a rustic shooting sparrows. The shot actually broke the window of the nursery.

The marriages of the royal brothers had now been arranged,

* Miss Wynne gives a graphic picture of this Princess in her old age, in which is included a detailed account of her mode of dealing with the conqueror.

† The letter is in Lord Houghton's collection.

and were to inaugurate some very disagreeable discussions on the allowances the nation was to make to them. There was something amusing in this sudden ardour to secure the chance of presenting heirs to the crown. The Duke of Cambridge was contracted to the Princess Augusta of Hesse, the Duke of Clarence to Princess Adelaide of Saxe Meningen, and the Duke of Kent to Princess Victoria of Leiningen. Two years before Princess Mary had been married to her cousin, the Duke of Gloucester, while Princess Elizabeth now chose the ungainly Prince of Homburg, or "Humbug," as he was called. This, with Princess Charlotte's marriage, and that of the Duke of Cumberland to Princess Salmos, made up no less than seven royal marriages within a short period; and no wonder the English public was in surly humour when these personages came asking for handsome provision. When £10,000 a year was proposed for the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, the House of Commons promptly reduced the sum to £6000, on which the sailor Duke formally announced, through Lord Castlereagh, that he had broken off the match. By pressure the House was induced to give way to his wishes. £6000 a year each was then granted to the others, save in the instance of the Duke of Cumberland, who, in the most pointed, mortifying way, was actually refused any provision whatever; a jointure, however, being given to his wife.

At last, on July 11th, the two marriages took place in the drawing-room at Kew, as the Queen was too feeble to go out. There was something pathetic in this her last appearance, for she was now actually dying, and she showed her undaunted spirit, determined to go through every ceremony to the end. In November her long and troubled life came to a close. It is gratifying to record that her eldest son was remarked for his assiduous care and anxiety to alleviate her sufferings.

In the interval, however, he attracted public attention by an absurd exhibition at table, where he entertained the foreign ministers by singing some jovial songs, to which they listened with due gravity.

Indeed, many stories of this grotesque kind were beginning to get abroad. As he was now nearly sixty years, a little sobriety and seriousness might have been expected. However, the healthy pastime of yachting, which he had lately begun to follow, gave evidence of a better taste. The following year he had intended visiting the Isle of Wight for the regatta given by "The Sailing Club Society;" but the death of the Queen was expected, and he could not in decency leave town. "All the Princes," Mr. Greville writes, "were delaying their departure, expecting and looking out for the plunder to arise from the

Queen's death." The dying lady must have felt strange memories coming back on her of that long life, the last twenty years of which, at least, were charged with more troubles and sorrows than seemed likely to fall to the lot of one of her ordinary subjects. It was indeed a sad life to review: a husband afflicted with incurable madness; a son waging war with his parents, and the cause of his father's malady; other children bringing discredit on their name and family; a loved daughter and granddaughter cut off in a sad and sudden way; a daughter-in-law associated with scandals not yet ripe, indeed but part ripening; marriages made in defiance of her wishes; debts and borrowings; such had been the afflictions of her middle and old age. She died in her chair, as her son, the Duke of York, was later to die, on November 17th, 1818.

The loss of this parent, however, furnished the Regent with an opportunity for exercising his darling taste. Buckingham House, long known as the "Queen's House," had become now his own—an ancient, old-fashioned, and dilapidated pile of red brick, and much in the condition of Carlton House when it came into his hands. But these were actual advantages—"great capabilities," as Mr. Brown used to say—opportunities for alteration, rebuilding, and adornment. Carlton House was scarcely to his mind, though recently he had assembled a cabinet of virtuosi and architects to debate new improvements, and "add a new wing." How much better to begin afresh on the old pile; and accordingly he proposed to set to work on the palace; the public furnishing money for the necessary alterations.* It had been seen what a fascination the costly pastime of building had for the Prince all through his life. This folly involved him in distress and discredit, but it must be owned that London owes to him the patronage of the magnificent wholesale projects which laid out the long line of handsome streets that stretch from Carlton House Terrace up Waterloo Place, Regent Street, to Langham Place, terminated by the handsome Regent's Park. It has been told how bold and imperial was the scheme. The inspirer of the whole was Nash, the architect, who introduced the "stucco palaces" and the ambitious style of terrace found in the Regent's Park; which, indeed, offer a great variety of treatment. After all objections, the new quarter remains a creditable and even imposing work of an architectural pretension; and it will be noted what variety was obtained by breaking the line of houses into distinct groups or blocks. Within living

* Mr. Herries, in his memoir of his father, mentions a formal resolve of the King "never to build a palace." But he preferred "restoration," and those at Windsor, Carlton, and Buckingham cost far more.

memory a fine piazza ran on both sides of the Quadrant, which was removed in deference to the commercial interests of the shopkeepers. Her Majesty's Theatre was newly fronted, in the same taste, by the architect, and with fine effect. The architect was accused of having bought ground at a low price, and at his own official valuation, from the commissioners, which he disposed of for building purposes at about three times the price.* The patronage of the King, who was all through his friend, brought him valuable assistance and fortune.†

Yet within a few years, with a curious capriciousness, the King was willing to sacrifice the palace, for which this costly scheme had been originally designed, and cheerfully consented that Carlton House should be pulled down. On the Queen's death he proposed, as we have seen, "removing to Buckingham House, which led to an extraordinary suggestion on the part of the Premier, Lord Liverpool, though accompanied by a lecture. He felt it to be his duty to submit his opinion that, "however desirable some addition to the Queen's palace may be (with a view to his Royal Highness holding Drawing Rooms), it would not be felt by the public to be indispensably necessary; and could but think, therefore, that in the present circumstances of the country such addition would better be deferred. The only measure which could be resorted to would be to sell or to lease the site on which St. James's Palace now stands. Lord Liverpool would not be acting fairly by his Royal Highness if he did not endeavour to impress upon him that any measure of this sort would be viewed with particular jealousy, and, if it could be carried through the House of Commons, it would be only on the ground that the Treasury were to be strictly responsible for the extent of the undertaking (not exceeding the amount of the sum raised by the means above mentioned), and for the execution in detail of the intended improvement."

On the death of the Queen the family met to settle about her property, and the four young Princesses were to receive the "golden heaps," to the great disappointment of the Princes, "particularly Clarence," says Mr. Fremantle, "who fully expected something."‡

It had been well had there been merely question of a division

* The architect, however, was acquitted of having thus turned his opportunities to undue profit, though the transaction was brought before the House of Commons.

† Augustus at Rome was for building renowned,
And of marble he left what of brick he had found;
But is not our Nash, too, a very great master?
He finds us all bricks and he leaves us all plaster.—G. R. 1825.

‡ "Regency," ii. 291.

of her personalty, but she had left behind her a vacant office, namely the guardianship of the King. It was the fate of the royal family always to exhibit a certain eagerness for such offices that excited public notice. It was perhaps natural that the Duke of York, her second son, should succeed as "Custos;" but, considering that the late King's expenses were defrayed out of his own allowance, it was urged that £10,000 a year was an immense sum to allow for the expenses of an occasional visit to Windsor, "to look at his Majesty." Indeed the outcry was so strong that the Duke at last proposed to his brother to undertake the office *gratis*, or for the mere expenses out of pocket. The latter, with that caustic shrewdness which marked him in such matters, said: "So, sir, you would be popular at our expense!"*

During these discussions, a piece of national extravagance was revealed which seems surprising to our more economical times, namely that presents in the shape of snuff-boxes, etc., had been made to the foreign ministers to the amount of £22,000!

Not so well known, or perhaps recollected, is the circumstance that previous to the birth of the Princess Victoria there had been another Princess in the line of succession, who, had she lived, would have excluded her present Majesty. This was the daughter of the Duke of Clarence, the Princess Charlotte, born on March 1, 1819, but who lived only a few hours. The Princess Victoria, born on May 24, 1819, then came into the direct succession, but was displaced by another daughter of the Duke of Clarence, Princess Elizabeth, born in December, 1820, who lived only three months. Her death restored the Princess Victoria to the chance of succeeding to the throne.

This event—the birth of the future Queen of England—seems to have been considered but of slight importance, probably on account of the poor estimation in which the Duke was held: or being perhaps considered certain that the Duke of York would inherit, and that the recently married Dukes would have children, the Duke of Kent being only the King's fourth son. The christening of the Princess Victoria took place on June 24th, in the grand saloon of Kensington Palace, in presence of the Regent, the Duke of York, and the Princes and Princesses. She received the names of Alexandra Victoria; the first in compliment to the Emperor of Russia, who had been selected as godfather.

The ferment in the public mind continuing, taking the

* "The royal Duke's only duty to his afflicted father," said Mr. Tierney, "would be to go from London or Oatlands to Windsor once or twice a week, and it was modestly proposed that he should be allowed £10,000 a year for the hire of post horses! The real expense," he added, "would not be more than £200."

shape of vast disorderly assemblages, and which culminated in the well-known Peterloo riots, helped to rally to the Regent the support of men of position and politicians opposed to his Government. We find the Grenvilles and Buckinghams renewing their old adhesion, just as the Duke of Portland and other Whigs had done a generation before, through apprehensions of the excesses of the French Revolution. The result was crowded and brilliant levees, which the Regent now held at Buckingham House for the first time, and it is not surprising to find that this general adhesion was interpreted as a sign of popularity.

At last the time approached when the good old King was to lay down his weary life. After reaching the age of eighty-two, and reigning sixty years, the last ten of which had been a living death—blind, as well as insane—on January the 29th he closed his unhappy course. Only a week before, his son, the Duke of Kent, was carried off by a feverish cold, which terminated a life that seems to have been one long course of anxieties and struggles. The aged King breathed his last attended by his favourite son, the Duke of York; but his eldest was not able, from ill-health, to be with him. Thus, at the age of fifty-nine, King George IV. ascended the throne.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1811—1820.

At this point, when the Regency has come to a close, it may be interesting to take a review of the glories for which the old "Regency Days" were celebrated—its dandies and other personages, its triumphs of dress, and, above all, the peculiar fashion of manners and entertainments which it introduced, with a person at the head of affairs of special taste in this direction, eager to inspire changes in modes and costumes. As we recall these glories, one name rises to our lips as the very incarnation of dandyism, not merely in the superficial externals of dandyism, but in its character—that of George Brummell, of whose course I shall give a sketch.

The career of this personage is not uninstructive, or without a wholesome moral, for those who are called votaries of fashion; for a more terrible finale to incurable selfishness and heartlessness is not to be found "in the Books." When he was only sixteen, he was given a commission in the well-known "Tenth" (the Prince of Wales's); but when it was first ordered to Manchester, the shock proved too much for Mr. Brummell, who retired. He became the friend of the Prince of Wales, owing to his amusing and caustic style of conversation. He took the lead in questions of dress. The Prince would drive to his house in Chesterfield Street of a morning, sit there long, and then propose that his host should give him a little dinner, when the night was prolonged into an orgie.

His father was wealthy, a man of business to Lord Liverpool, and it is stated he gave each of his children nearly £30,000. The details associated with his dandyism become sickening from their triviality and childishness. We are told that this eminent

arbiter required two different artists to make his gloves, one being appointed to provide "thumbs," the other the fingers and hand, on the ground that a particular "cut" was necessary for each. The valet carrying down the load of crushed neckerchiefs, which the beau had not succeeded in squeezing with his chin down into the proper folds, and carelessly described as "our failures," is an old well-worn legend, but trustworthy. "He believed that with strict economy dressing might be done on eight hundred a year." He always went home after the opera to change his cravat for succeeding parties. Like Count d'Orsay, a later dandy, he carried about with him an enormous chest, containing every appliance for the toilet; the dishes, bottles, etc. being of silver. The use of these costly articles he justified on the ground "that it was impossible to spit in earthenware." Another of his pleasant, insolent speeches was to a friend inviting his criticism or admiration of his new coat: "My dear ——, do you call that thing a coat?"

There was a flavour in his wit, too, whether he wrote or spoke, that was quite distinct and piquant; something of a Voltairean heartlessness and finish. A good specimen is his answer to a question: Had he heard anything as to how a newly-married pair, at whose wedding he had assisted a week before, were getting on? "No, no; but I believe they are still living together." Another speech of his is excellent, referring to a beginner who had been recommended to his patronage. "Really, I did my best for the young man. I once gave him my arm all the way from White's to Watier's"—*i.e.* from St. James's Street to Bruton Street.

It is well known that a serious quarrel broke up the intimacy between the Prince and the dandy; and a sort of dramatic point is given to the incident, owing to a happy repartee of the Prince's. This, like so many mock pearls of history, has been seized on by the public, who will not part with it, and prefer it to the real stone.

The real cause of this quarrel was no doubt disgust and jealousy, the Prince probably resenting his independent airs. There was a corpulent gentleman who used to ride a roan cob in the Park as the Prince himself did, and Mr. Brummell, in a free and easy strain, got into the habit of speaking to his friends of the Prince as "Our Ben." This indiscreet jest was, of course, repeated, and the "Adonis of Fifty" did not relish such familiarity. There are a good many versions of the story. In one the beau was represented as being so familiar as to say, "George, ring the bell!" the Prince complying with the request and ordering "Mr. Brummell's carriage;" on which the intimacy of years ended, and was succeeded by an internecine war.

It may be said on the best evidence that this anecdote is exaggerated. Mr. Raikes, who knew him very intimately, declares that Brummell always denied the story. Captain Jesse, the writer of a curious account of the beau, now so exceedingly scarce as to be worth guineas, also says that Brummell denied it, but that the incident occurred; the hero being a young nephew of the well-known Captain Payne, who had taken too much wine and grew familiar. The Prince rang the bell for the servants, and said, "Put that drunken boy to bed." Lord William Lennox, also well acquainted with Brummell, says that he also denied the truth of the story to him. This alone might show how doubtful the authority of the tale is; but Captain Gronow, an ex-dandy, actually learned what took place from a guest who was present at the Prince's dinner-table: "Brummell was asked one night at White's to take a hand at whist, when he won from George Harley Drummond £20,000. This circumstance having been related by the Duke of York to the Prince of Wales, the beau was again invited to Carlton House. At the commencement of the dinner, matters went off smoothly; but Brummell, in his joy at finding himself with his old friend, became excited, and drank too much wine. His Royal Highness—who wanted to pay off Brummell for an insult he had received at Lady Cholmondeley's ball, when the beau, turning towards the Prince, said to Lady Worcester: 'Who is your fat friend?'—had invited him to dinner merely out of a desire for revenge. The Prince therefore pretended to be affronted with Brummell's hilarity, and said to his brother, the Duke of York, who was present: 'I think we had better order Mr. Brummell's carriage before he gets drunk.' Whereupon he rang the bell, and Brummell left the royal presence."

The speech, "Who is your fat friend?" Mr. Raikes says was uttered to Jack Lee in the street: while yet another account describes the dandies—Alvanley, Brummell, Pierrepoint, and Sir H. Mildmay—giving a ball at the Hanover Square Rooms, to which the Prince at the last minute had invited himself. The four received him at the door with wax lights, the Prince greeting each, until he came to Brummell, whom he looked at as if he did not know him, and "cut." Then it was that the discarded beau made the remark to Lord Alvanley. But there is a better and more accurate version of the story supplied to me by Lord Houghton, in which the scene and characters are a little changed.

"The tradition of his impertinence rests on certain stories which are often told without the circumstances that explain or excuse them. An example of this may be given in one, which, as it is usually related, is simply insolence without humour, but

which, as it really occurred, is not without its vindication. Mr. Brummell was one of the committee of the fête given by the three most fashionable clubs to the Allied sovereigns in 1815. The scene was Burlington House, or rather the garden behind it, where a monster marquee was erected. The committee lined the passage through the house, and each royal personage as he passed shook hands with the members alternately from side to side. Mr. Brummell was standing opposite Sir Henry Mildmay, with whom the Regent shook hands, and instead of taking him in his natural turn, passed him over and saluted the next opposite member, thus presenting the reverse of his portly figure to Mr. Brummell, who, leaning over it, said to Sir Henry in a loud aside, 'Henry, who is our fat friend?'

"Considering the old intimacy, indeed, as far as the difference of state permitted, the friendship between Prince and playfellow, this was felt at the time to be rather a witty retort to a provocation than an unmannerly insult. In the same sense, the anecdote of Brummell telling the Prince to ring the bell, is very much altered by the circumstance that the Prince was sitting on a sofa close to it, so that the speech of the familiar guest was rather uncourtly than ungentlemanlike."

Later he took the matter up with a sort of jocular tone, as when the Prince was getting out of his carriage in Pall Mall, to visit a picture-gallery, and the sentries presented arms, Brummell, who happened to be passing, affected to accept the salute as to himself, took off his hat graciously, keeping his back to the carriage. Those who stood by noted the Prince's angry look as he passed.

"I was standing," runs another story, "near the stove of the lower waiting-room, talking to several persons, of whom one is now alive. The Prince of Wales, who always came out rather before the performance concluded, was also standing there, and waiting for his carriage, which used to drive up what was then Market Lane, now the Opera Arcade. Presently, Brummell came out, talking eagerly to some friends, and, not seeing the Prince or his party, he took up a position near the check-taker's bar. As the crowd flowed out, Brummell was gradually pressed backwards, until he was all but driven against the Regent, who distinctly saw him, but who of course would not move. In order to stop him, therefore, and prevent actual collision, one of the Prince's suite tapped him on the back, when Brummell immediately turned sharply round, and saw that there was not much more than a foot between his nose and the Prince of Wales's. I watched him with intense curiosity, and observed that his countenance did not change in the slightest degree, nor did his head move; they looked straight into each other's eyes; the Prince evidently amazed and annoyed.

Brummell, however, did not quail, or show the least embarrassment. He receded quite quietly, and backed slowly step by step till the crowd closed between them, never once taking his eyes off those of the Prince."

At Watier's club, where gaming prevailed to an extravagant degree, he reigned supreme. He was particularly noted for his snuffboxes—a mania of the time—costly jewelled and enamelled and be-miniatured boxes being displayed and given as presents.

"At this place, he (Mr. Raikes says) "was the supreme dictator, 'the perpetual president,' laying down the law in dress, in manners, and in those magnificent snuffboxes for which there was a rage; he fomented the excesses, ridiculed the scruples, patronised the novices, and exercised paramount dominion over all. He had great success at Macao, winning in two or three years a large sum, which went no one knew how. I remember him coming in one night after the opera to Watier's and finding the Macao table full, one place at which was occupied by Tom Sheridan, who was not in the habit of playing, but having dined freely had dropped into the club, and was trying to catch the smiles of fortune by risking a few pounds which he could ill afford to lose. Brummell proposed to him to give up his place and go shares in his deal; and adding to the £10 in counters which Tom had before him £200 for himself, took the cards. He dealt with his usual success, and in less than ten minutes won £1500. He then stopped, made a fair division, and giving £750 to Sheridan, said to him: 'There, Tom, go home, and give your wife and brats a supper, and never play again."

At a dinner given on the reopening of Watier's club in Piccadilly, Brummell and the late Duke of Beaufort, then Marquis of Worcester, were present. Leaning back in his chair, Brummell thus addressed the waiter: "Is Lord Worcester here?" (he was seated within two of him). "Yes, sir," was the answer. "Tell his lordship," continued Brummell, "I shall be happy to drink a glass of wine with him." "Yes, sir," replied the servant. "Tell him I drink his health." This was to avoid turning his head. After the proper interval, Brummell inquired: "Is his lordship ready?" "Yes, sir." "Then tell him I drink his health!"*

The scene now changes to Calais. Even to this hour the little town is scarcely altered, and suggests ideas of a hideous monotony should fate compel one to be imprisoned there. But how almost dramatic is the terrible character of the change for the

* Lord Houghton, who has furnished us with this version and with many other details, to the advantage of the work, was well acquainted with Brummell, and often visited him on passing through Calais.

elegant man of fashion—in a night become a runaway exile, destined to be hunted by French bailiffs instead of English ones; to be immured in a squalid noisome French gaol with felons; and die in a madhouse, a painful, odious, and unregretted object! The house where he lived is still, or was till lately, shown in the Rue Royale, or Leveux, close to the old Dessein's Hotel, which Sterne made famous. In 1816 he astounded Mr. Raikes, who was meeting him at every party, by confiding to him that his situation was utterly desperate, and that he was flying that night to France. He appeared at the opera, then flung himself into a carriage-and-four, and, travelling all night to Dover, was landed in Calais on the following day. True to his selfish instincts, and without money beyond what he could borrow, he set up in this miserable place as the man of fashion and luxury.

In a curious little book on Calais, written in 1852, it is stated that there were then several exiles in the place who recalled Mr. Brummell as he used to appear, unfailing as the town-hall clock, for his regular promenade on the Place. A triste spot enough, on which every little street determines—the little harbour, the forts, the walls, all make it like a sort of yard. Yet in those days it was more like what Boulogne is now, for it was crowded with emigrants. Brummell soon left Dessein's and quartered himself on a Mr. Leleux, whose rooms he made quite elegant with his charming and costly china, snuffboxes, bijouterie, mostly purchased out of borrowings from faithful friends who passed through, and who never failed to see him and give him a dinner. His debts in the town soon mounted to nearly a thousand pounds. When his old patron became King, he fancied, not unnaturally, that the past might be forgotten. "Will his resentments," he wrote to the same friend, "still attach themselves to his crown? An indulgent amnesty of former peccadilloes should be the primary grace influencing newly-throned sovereignty—at least, towards those who were once distinguished by his more intimate protection. From my experience, however, of the personage in question, I must doubt any favourable relaxation of those stubborn prejudices. I cannot decamp a second time," etc.

We may pursue this dismal story to the end, anticipating events by many years. The King, just returned from Ireland, lost no time in planning another expedition, and had hardly rested from the fatigues of his journey when he started for Hanover. On the 22nd of September, 1821, he sailed from Ramsgate, and after a rough passage, reached Calais. That little town was en fête, the inhabitants, native and foreign, in prodigious agitation. To none did this arrival, however, bring more excite-

ment than to the broken-down bankrupt man of fashion, the King's former favourite and companion, whose hopes were raised. He had gone out to take his accustomed walk in an opposite direction, and was returning to his lodgings at the very moment that his former patron, accompanied by the French ambassador, was proceeding in a close carriage to the hotel. "I was standing at my shop-door," said his landlord, "and saw Mr. Brummell trying to make his way across the street to my house, but the crowd was so great that he could not succeed, and he was therefore obliged to remain on the opposite side. All hats were taken off as the carriage approached, and when it was close to the door I heard the King say in a loud voice: 'Good God! Brummell!' The latter, who was uncovered at the time, now crossed over as pale as death, entered the house by the private door, and retired to his room without addressing me. A sumptuous dinner was given in the evening at Dessein's, and Sélègue, Brummell's valet, who was a *chef* in his way, attended to make the punch; he took with him also, by his master's orders, some excellent maraschino, a liqueur to which he remembered the King was extremely partial, though cannelle was, I believe, his favourite dram. In the afternoon it was observed his Majesty was not in his usual spirits; was this occasioned by his recognition of the morning, and to the uncertainty whether Brummell would make his appearance or not? *Chi lo sa?* he never came; the maraschino at dinner diminished any unpleasant feeling—if it ever did exist—that the dread of such a *contretemps* might have created, and the evening passed off admirably."

The next morning all the King's suite, excepting Bloomfield, called upon him. It is stated that they pressed him to request an audience, but that he refused. He, however, wrote his name in the visitors' book at the hotel. At all events the King quitted Calais without seeing him, as his Majesty was heard to remark in the courtyard at Dessein's. The poor beau had by this time abated all that haughtiness and independence, and would have been as eager to secure a pecuniary souvenir from his Majesty as from his own friends. His sending his maraschino and some of his favourite snuff were so many reminders. It seems likely that the King shrank from the inconvenience of reconciliation with a man in such decay, and sent him—so it was rumoured—a banknote for £100, with a contemptuous remark that that was, he supposed, what was desired. The King, however, and he never met again.

Friends at home were now exerting themselves. Something, it was felt, "must be done for Brummell." No less a personage than the Duke of York, always good-natured and ready to do

a kind thing, procured for the beau the consulship at Caen. He was a favourite with the Duchess, who no doubt aided his cause. After many difficulties he was enabled to get away, and establishing himself at his new scene of action, was treated with great consideration, and flourished away as the leader of ton and manners in a provincial town. Before this, the Duke of Wellington told Mr. Greville, in 1829, "that Lord Aberdeen hesitated; that he had offered to take all the responsibility on himself; that he had in Dudley's time proposed it to him (Dudley), who had objected, and at last owned he was afraid the King might not like it, on which he had spoken to the King, who had made objections, abusing Brummell, said he was a damned fellow, and had behaved very ill to him—(the old story, always himself—*moi, moi, moi*)—but after having let him run out his tether of abuse, he had at last extracted his consent; nevertheless, Dudley did not give him the appointment. The Duke said he had no acquaintance with Brummell."

And now we come to what seems to have always been held a mystery, and which is yet held intelligible—his abrupt resignation of his consulship at Caen. It seemed, indeed, like madness that this professional mendicant should throw up his only chance of support. He wrote to Lord Palmerston to say that the place was a sinecure; there was nothing to do, and that it ought to be abolished. Lord Palmerston reluctantly accepted the suggestion. There was a cry, he said, for retrenchment, and what could he do? Abolished accordingly it was, and the infatuated man left penniless. Four hundred a-year was no indifferent provision; his Calais debts ought to have been discharged out of it in three or four years. What then was the motive of this mysterious act? It can only be set down to the curious temper of this most selfish of beings. He was deeply in debt at Caen, and had been drawing on his old creditor at Calais, anticipating his income, even after its mortgage, until no more could be obtained. He was already using as lever to extract money from this person, that "it was his interest" to advance money, as, if he were forced to forfeit his position owing to not being able to pay butcher, baker, etc., the security would be lost. We may suppose that he saw no reason for performing the duties of an office the whole emoluments of which were to go to a greedy creditor, whom in a moment of pique he determined thus to punish. His own story is that he sent in his resignation with a view to obtain something better at Havre or elsewhere. After taking this step, the royal arms being removed from over his door, it was all over with this unfortunate. The Calais creditor was not slow to punish such treatment. One

morning, in 1835, he was arrested at his suit and dragged off to the dreadful gaol of the place. The part of the transaction that most affected him was his having to dress before the *gens d'armes*. His sufferings in this terrible place may be conceived; but he contrived to have his essences, dressingcase, and two quarts of milk daily to mix in his bath! However, he had a useful agent named Armstrong, one of those Englishmen who sell, and do everything—and this person, seeing that the prisoner had valuable friends in England, determined to work this vein thoroughly, and set off to wait on the Alvanleys, Worcesters, and other dandies. Large sums were given by those who had given largely before. King William contributed £100, and Lord Palmerston added £200 from the public purse. So successful was the expedition that all his debts were compounded for, and a promise of a sort of annuity obtained from Mr. C. Greville, Lord Sefton, and others. It was remarkable, as a good test of character, that to those who exerted themselves to relieve his sufferings in prison he showed himself careless and indifferent, as resenting an obligation associated with so humiliating a passage in his career. He was now enjoying about £120 a-year. He was soon in difficulties again, oddly enough on the score of his boot-varnish, at five francs a bottle, brought from Paris specially. But soon significant changes began to be noted in the beau. He gave up not merely white cravats, but washing, and became notorious for the neglect of his appearance.

Nothing is more pitiable than the story of his steady settled decadence into idiotcy. The scene of his sitting in his lonely room and having ghostly visitors announced, though somewhat elaborated for dramatic purposes, has, no doubt, foundation. In 1838 his condition had become truly deplorable from dotage and helplessness: no one was inclined to take charge of the outcast Englishman. At last he found a refuge in the asylum Bon Sauveur, where kindly nuns soothed the last hours of the miserable old creature. The clergyman who attended him tried in vain to draw his mind to consider his soul, and, rather unreasonably, inveighs bitterly against this indifference in an imbecile. "I never," he says, "in the course of my attendance upon the sick, aged, and dying, came in contact with so painful an exhibition of human vanity and apparent ignorance, until a few years before he died, when, in reply to my repeated entreaties that he would try and pray, he said: 'I do try;' but he added something which made me doubt whether he understood me." A good nun who came later takes a kindly woman's view. "On the evening of his death," she says, "I observed him assume an appearance of intense anxiety and fear, and he fixed his eyes upon

me with an expression of entreaty, raising his hands towards me as he lay in the bed, and as though asking for assistance (*ayant l'air d'implorer que je vienne à son secours*), but saying nothing. Upon this, I requested him to repeat after me the *acte de contrition*. He immediately consented, and repeated after me in an earnest manner that form of prayer. He then became more composed, and laid his head down on one side; but this tranquillity was interrupted about an hour after by his turning himself over and uttering a cry, at the same time appearing to be in pain; he soon, however, turned himself back, with his face laid on the pillow towards the wall, so as to be hidden from us who were on the other side; after this he never moved, dying imperceptibly." It was a quarter-past nine in the evening of the 30th of March, 1840. Such was the fate of Brummell!

Another dandy of influence who survived the Regency, its pleasures, his royal master and companion, and lived to be nearly eighty years old, was Lord Yarmouth, afterwards Marquess of Hertford, who was fortunate enough to carry off the young heiress, Miss Fagniani, and well known among his friends as "Red Herrings." *

About the dandy of the Regency there was a certain politeness, accompanied by unbounded selfishness, extravagance, and general recklessness. They were "bloods" as well as dandies; of a different stamp to the effeminate macaronis. The "saloon" being an essential ingredient in theatrical amusements, described so minutely in the adventures of "Tom and Jerry," it will be understood that refinement of bearing or manners was scarcely in vogue. Mr. Boaden notes that even the behaviour of gentlemen in the boxes had grown boorish; loud talking, hectoring, quarrels, and putting the feet up on the seats, being among the customs and habits of men of fashion.†

There was a great improvement of tone, however, in the later generation of Alvanleys, Brummells, Worcesters, Grevilles, and

* This system of nicknames was continued to a later generation. Thus we find "Kangaroo" Cook, a colonel of that name, who had some adventure, or story of an adventure, with a kangaroo. Mr. Frederick Byng, universally known as "Poodle" Byng, whom Lord Melbourne, when seats were being allotted in a carriage, declared that "Byng was to *go under* the carriage, of course." "Ball" Townshend; "Bacchus" Lascelles; "Teapot" Crawfurd, and "Skirmish" Bligh; "Punch" Greville, or "the Gruncher," was the *sobriquet* of the writer of the well-known "Memoirs;" Sir Francis Burdett was "Old Glory;" Lord Allen was "King" Allen; and Matthew Lewis, "Monk Lewis." There was also "Tippoo" Smith.

† In the prints of the day we see such representations as an English fireside, where the men stand up with their backs to the fire, their hands in their breeches-pockets, or snoring on the sofa, the ladies looking on.

others; as, indeed, the Duchess of York assured the latter gentleman: "There was more heart, restraint, and good-nature."

One of the chief leading dandies was Lord Allen—known as "King" Allen—to whom the remark was attributed that "the English could make nothing well but a kitchen poker," and who could not live a day out of Pall Mall or the Bond Street lounge. Being obliged to go to a watering-place, he lost his sleep and pined to return, until his friend, Lord Alvanley, good-naturedly engaged a hackney coachman to drive up and down of nights, past his lodgings, with a man to call the hours like a London watchman. Lord Fife was another of these veteran "bucks," who distinguished himself in his old age by expending £80,000 on a dancer. He was, however, to be one of the few whom George IV. was to regard with affection. "Ball" Hughes is remembered by many now alive—being known as "Golden Ball"—a good dresser, with £40,000 a-year, a spendthrift, a gambler, so eager for the excitement dependent on chance that he would stake immense sums on "pitch and toss," and play battledore and shuttlecock the whole night long for a match. He distinguished himself by a ridiculous marriage with a *figurante*. As a pendant we find Mr. Haynes—better known as "Peagreen" Haynes—against whom the well-known Miss Foote brought an action for breach of promise.

Lord Alvanley was another of the dandies whose wit and humour were excellent and racy. He was always ready with a pleasant or biting retort. To him was attributed the reply to the original Gunter, who was complaining of his horse being "too hot to hold"—"Ice him then, Gunter"—the credit of which, however, has been given to one of the royal dukes. His pleasant saying to the hackney coach after the duel ("for bringing me back") is well known. He was much distinguished as an epicure, wishing to have the best of everything. His dinners "were considered perfect," and his standing direction to his cook was to have "an apricot tart" every day. Indeed, he would say that a neck of venison (with some other *plat*) and an apricot tart was "a dinner fit for an emperor." Strange credentials these for the grateful memory of posterity. At country houses, where his jocund face was always foremost at the hunt, he was but an inconvenient if not dangerous guest, from his practice of putting out his candle by flinging the bolster at it, or thrusting it under his pillow.

This generation also included such strange men as Dr. Parr and Porson; and, of another degree, Dr. Kitchener, the "gastronome." The first, "a very dungeon" of learning, is a remarkable figure, with his eternal pipe, his blunt sarcastic speeches, vigorous politics, and unshaken independence. Porson equally united Greek and eccentricity. We find Dr. Parr at the Prince's

table; and it is certainly to the latter's credit, that he should have thus invariably drawn to himself, from curiosity or taste, for a longer or shorter period, whatever was intellectual or intelligent in the kingdom. In no instance had evil company and low tastes done more mischief; but these influences had never succeeded in stifling his instincts, and the love of wine was cultivated and intellectual.

Many of these persons made reputations and earned their names by some ridiculous freak or wager. "Walking" Stewart seems to have walked to Edinburgh to hear the lectures of his namesake, Dugald Stewart; while "Jerusalem" Whaley had agreed that "he would play ball" against the walls of that city. At this time also flourished Beckford, with his "Arabian Nights'" projects of vast towers and halls, and which he was suffered to attempt to realise to the public wonder and admiration, instead of contempt or laughter. The mysterious privacy and inalienability that he affected, the rumours of strange rites and practices within his high walls, the falling in of the Babel-like tower he was rearing; his strange clever romance, "Vathek," his freaks—all these tales were repeated, and caused the deepest interest and curiosity. Even that eccentric and manœuvring lady of quality, the Duchess of Gordon, it was reported, eager to secure the millionaire for one of her daughters, had succeeded in getting within the gates, but could not see the lord of the castle.

Even the toleration extended to such public jokers as Theodore Hook was remarkable; and the relish with which his well-known "Berners St. Hoax" was enjoyed, was significant of the time.

The Princess of Wales encouraged games of romps at Blackheath and other places. Much of this taste was indeed owing to the jovial Prince, who led society, and who dearly loved a joke and practical joking, as well as a good story. Anyone with social gifts, and endowed with a love of frolic, and a power of saying good things, was certain to find his way to the table at Carlton House. There, too, he could retain his place, so long as his powers remained unflagging.

Accompanying all this buffoonery and jesting, a spirit of wit and even sagacity was cultivated. Many of the sayings and repartees circulated have really high merit for their readiness and brilliancy, and it has been already noted what lively spirited letters they were capable of writing. "Verses of society," full of happily-turned compliments and pleasant allusions, or lively epigrams, were a part of their accomplishments. Indeed, a long list could be made of agreeable occasional poems, written by

these men of fashion, including "The Waltz," by Lord Byron; "The Pursuits of Fashion," "The Art of Poking the Fire," "Conversation," and many other productions. Good songs, plays, essays, and stories came abundantly from this agreeable coterie.

A turn for epigram was one of the features of the day, and led, of course, to much ill-nature. A fair specimen is Lord Byron's attack on Rogers. They began:

> Nose and chin to shame a knocker,
> Wrinkles that would puzzle Cocker.

The poet of Memory was himself as unsparing of others, and wrote of an acquaintance:

> They say that Ward's no heart, but I deny it.
> He has a heart and gets his speeches by it.

Physical infirmities or blemishes were "fair game." A wit said to a courtier with long legs and a long sword: "My dear ——, I cannot see whether you have three swords or three legs." Sir Lumley Skeffington, a decayed old fop overtaken by debts and difficulties, and restored to society on being extricated from prison, old and broken down and discredited, was greeted by the lively Alvanley as a new edition "illustrated by cuts." Lord Byron also condescended to ridicule him:

> Still Skeffington and Goose divide the prize,
> And sure great Skeffington must claim our praise
> For skirtless coats and skeletons of plays.

Lord Carhampton, the old opponent of Wilkes, survived till the year 1825, one of the "hardest livers" of his time. When he was lying hopelessly ill in Berkeley Square, some parasite brought news of his condition, or that he was dead, to the King, then sitting at the head of a convivial party at Carlton House. The story went that the Regent at once bestowed his regiment of Carabineers on a guest who was at table. It is characteristic of the spirit and good-humour of these men of pleasure, that the other should have sent a pleasant message to beg that the Prince would dispose of any other regiment but that one, and that he might rest assured that he would receive the earliest information of a probable vacancy from himself.

When Captain Gronow visited Lord Petersham, whom he found employed in making a particular sort of blacking which "he said would eventually supersede every other," the room was like a shop: all round the walls were shelves with canisters of rare teas, of which this nobleman had made a choice collection;

on other shelves were canisters of rare snuffs, with apparatus for mixing and moistening. The mixtures which he devised used to be well known to tobacconists. He had also made a collection of costly canes. He devised a particular kind of great-coat, with a cape, which used to bear his name, and adopted a particular pattern for his liveries. His snuffboxes were remarkable, and he would say affectedly, when one of his Sèvres articles was praised: "Yes, a nice summer box, but wouldn't do for winter wear." All his servants wore a particular brown-coloured livery, and his carriages were painted of the same colour, which his friends reported was owing to his having been "jilted" by a widow of the name of Brown.

It was in these times that Hoby the bootmaker made a reputation, maintained almost to our own time. The ridiculous stories of boots made for riding only, and splitting "when used for walking to the stable," illustrate further the absurd gravity with which the question of dress was treated. Now flourished Rouland, the exquisites' hairdresser, later more celebrated as Rowland, and inventor of the famed "Macassar."* These two eminent artists had their shops in St. James's Street.

The deathbeds, too, of these unhappy beings were attended by circumstances in keeping with their frivolous lives. One committed suicide, leaving in writing the characteristic reason for the act, "that he was tired of buttoning and unbuttoning." Brummell, their leader, expired, as we have seen, "a driveller and a show." Montrond, the French dandy, in wit second only to his friend Talleyrand, declared to a friend on his deathbed that "there was nothing left—for he could not eat or drink." The slovenly Mr. Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley, whose absence of mind and oddities were as entertaining as wit in other men, was in 1832 consigned by Sir H. Halford to the charge of a keeper. Lord Sefton, a gay friend of the Regent, sank into torpor and a sort of idiotcy. Of Mr. George Payne—not the agreeable "man about town" of recent times—says Mr. Raikes dramatically:

"One evening I went into Watier's club, where I found Mr. George Payne waiting to make a rubber at whist; others soon arrived, and the play began. Nothing remarkable passed except that Mr. Payne was anxious to continue the game; and though we played till four or five o'clock, seemed disappointed at the party breaking up. I went home to bed, and soon after ten o'clock my servant Chapman came into my room to tell me that Mr. Payne had been that morning shot in a duel on Putney

* Five shillings was his charge for treating a gentleman's hair. At a dinner-party at a great house a guinea was expected by the butler.

Heath. Thus he had been purposely playing all the night in order to pass the time till he was summoned into eternity."

"Jack" Talbot, another *viveur* of mark, begged to be allowed to die in peace, "undisturbed by doctor or parson;" on which a lively brother *viveur* said that "he ought to have been cupped, as there was more claret than blood in his veins." His brother, a man about town, was found dead in his armchair—an unfinished bottle of sherry beside him. Mr. Berkeley Craven destroyed himself on learning the news that Bay Middleton had won the Derby. There is a strange French book entitled "Soupeurs de mon Temps," by Roger de Beauvoir, which chronicles the career and fate of some jovial roysterers—as witty too as they were jovial—of Louis Philippe's era, in which the same disastrous ending of madness or destitution seemed to attend nearly all.

Under all this frivolity there was a certain sagacity and force of character and observation exhibited in some of their notes on men and manners which many have left behind. Mr. Greville, who, however, flourished under the reign of George IV., exhibits this shrewdness in his Memoirs, well known for their sarcastic tone and ill-nature. Yet, under the mask of this cynic and follower of pleasure there was something good, and betokening heart.*

Nor were the ladies of the period inferior. The *très-grande dame* then reigned supreme; and with beauty there was to be

* "One day, at Broadlands," writes Mrs. Augustus Craven, "when Mr. Charles Greville was with us, he brought me what he called a very interesting book, and begged of me to read it. I took it to my room, but, glancing over a few pages, I saw that, interesting as it was, it was written in a sceptical and unbelieving tone, that seemed to me as odious as it was unjust. That same evening I returned him the book, asking him why he had suggested it to me, since he must have known that it could only have pained me to read it. He replied that he had done so because what was good in it would be certain to please me, while the bad portion would do me no harm. 'Rely on this,' he added, with a feeling that was unusual with him, 'not for the world would I disturb your faith. Oh, God forbid! I should only be taking from you something great, and I have nothing to give you in return.' How often have I realised in reading particular passages in his journal the tone in which he said these words. Next day I heard a knock at my door, and, to my great surprise (for the practice is unusual in England), I saw Mr. Greville enter. 'I wish to speak to you,' he said, 'and take up what we were talking of yesterday, if you will let me.' Then followed a long and sad conversation. He spoke in a strain, too common, alas!—doubts of religion, a wish to believe, impossibility of understanding—a life too much engrossed with other things—time taken up: in short, void, regret, sadness! Such was the whole. I see him still: his head resting on the high chimney-piece, as he stood repeating: 'Oh! happy those who have a true faith. If it could be bought with gold, what would not one give for it!'"

found the gifts of a sprightly gaiety and wit, with a stately and refined tone. The type of the *grande dame* is now scarcely appreciated. What these dames resembled may be gathered from the pictures of Lawrence, in which we see faces of delicate fairness and refinement, with an air of placid dignity.

The ridiculous and grotesque extravagance of the costumes of this time seems scarcely conceivable out of a pantomime. In the caricatures and the plates of fashion—which seem more caricature than the caricatures themselves—are set forth these extraordinary habiliments, which were of the most fantastic and ludicrous kind. Brims so curled as to reach to the top of the hat; the crown of the hat so broad at the top, and so narrow at the bottom, as to resemble an inverted extinguisher; bonnets like sails; coat-collars which rose above the ears; waists of men, as of women, almost between the shoulders; sleeves like enormous *gigots*; trousers like vast balloons; plumes streaming in the air; eye-glasses in the tops of whips; stripes, flaming colours, topboots, and breeches; such were some of the fantastic freaks of dress. The Oldenburg hat—a hideous enveloping headdress introduced by the princess of that name; the Alcantara mantle—a "unique and elegant article," copied from the dress of the knights of the military order; "the Vigonian helmet," or patriotic bonnet, "which was set off by a waistcoat or wrap-front of marble or leopard-skin, with a Spartan robe for evening wear;" with the Braganza or Andalusian robe, and the "three-quarter or barouche coat;" the Flushing hat, the hat in the "jockey" style: all these designs were carried out with an amazing variety of parti-colours. A sort of travelling-cap, of the pattern that Russian officers now carry, with the addition of a tassel, was much affected by the Princess of Wales. Most of these extravagances came from France, but departed from the classic taste of the Empire. It was curious to find a remarkable foreign lady taking a leading part in directing the fashionable games and ceremonies. This was Princess Lieven, whose full undisputed reign indeed belongs to later date; but whose influence in politics, as well as in fashion, was felt to a late period: for we are now considering an era of manners which was continuous to the latter years of the King's reign. This clever woman was to exercise an extraordinary power over ministers and statesmen, and took her place as a recognised leader of society.*

The institution over which she presided became the inner sanctuary, as it were, of all that was select and fashionable. This was Almack's, the well-known series of balls held during

* See Lord Houghton's "Monographs" for a sketch of her, as well as the memoirs of Mr. Greville and Mr. Raikes, *passim*.

the season, at the still existing "Willis's Rooms," in King Street, St. James's.* The difficulty of obtaining admittance to these entertainments—always a judicious mode of making admission desirable—has been often described, as well as the passionate importunity with which cards were sought, and the mortification of refusal which brought despair and sometimes serious illness. The lady patronesses exercised their power with a despotism that was almost insolent. Persons of high rank were refused. This rigid system of exclusion led even to duels, and Lord Jersey was challenged by an officer because his wife had been refused a ticket. Lord Jersey declined to "go out" on the ground that it would be impossible for him to meet the vast numbers who could make that a cause of quarrel.

Of the nearly three hundred officers of the Brigade of Guards, mostly of the first families in the kingdom, scarcely half-a-dozen could obtain admission. It was in the year 1815 that Lady Jersey, "a tragedy queen," and the second lady of fashion of that name and line, introduced the now familiar quadrille, and Mr. Gronow recalled the solemn occasion when the first measure of the kind was performed. The names of the executants deserve to be recorded, including Lady Jersey, Lady H. Butler, Lady Susan Ryder, and Miss Montgomery, Count St. Aldegonde (one of the fashionable foreigners), Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Montague, and Mr. Charles Standish. The same observer recalled the spectacle of the late Lord Palmerston and Countess Lieven solemnly going through a waltz—a much more dignified measure than it is now.†

"No event," says Mr. Raikes, "ever produced so great a sensation in English society as the introduction of the German waltz in 1813. Up to that time the English country-dance, Scotch steps, and an occasional Highland reel, formed the school of the dancing-master. The young Duke of Devonshire, as the magnus Apollo of the drawing-rooms in London, was at the head of these innovations. In London fashion is, or was then, everything. Old and young returned to school, and the mornings which had been dedicated to lounging in the park were now absorbed at home in practising the figures of a French quadrille,

* Almack was originally McCall, and thus oddly transformed his name. He brought his countryman Gow's band from Edinburgh to the balls, which played reels and other Scotch dances.

† A fashionable journal of the day, "La Belle Assemblée," thus gravely describes the new dance: "The Waltzer is a native dance of Suabia, and strict translation of the term to denote a roller. A lady and gentleman take hold of each other in a certain graceful manner, turn about together with a simple sort of step, and then pass up and down the room. The movement is moderate."

or whirling a chair round the room to learn the step and measure of the German waltz. Two Dutchmen—Baron Tripp (appropriately named) and Baron Tuyll—were chief professors: the former some time after committed suicide at Florence. The emperors and their attendants took part in these gay measures, and the example of Courts led to the fashion.

General Thornton was also a popular professor of the new dance, and used to instruct parties of young ladies in the morning; while Lady Harriet Butler, who had been taught by the *dieu de la dance* himself, proved herself so apt and graceful a pupil that everyone stopped to look as she performed. Even many years later Pierce Egan describes the ardent devotee of the new dance, who

> Holds, lest the figure should be hard,
> Close to his nose a printed card.

Another remarkable woman of the time, whose life was adventurous, came to London in 1814, and, introduced into London society, caused a sort of *fureur*. This was Madame de Staël. The earliest of those attracted by the new star was the Regent, to whom her affectations and her exaggerated enthusiasm promised entertainment. The lady, however, in right of her intellectual sovereignty, stood out for the homage of a first call at her house in Argyle Street, which he was good-humoured enough to concede; and he further, as his grand gala at Carlton House was impending, "with more appearance of taste than he usually displays," says Mrs. Trench, went specially to a party at Lady Heathcote's, to allow of an opportunity for being presented to her, so that she might attend the fête on the following evening. When they met, however, she violated etiquette by putting him through a process of questioning, which did not please him. She was also said to have treated him cavalierly, and spoke in a strain of personal praise which was too strong for his taste, "particularly dwelling on the beauty of the form of his legs, but saying very little to him of the glories of his country, or the powers of his mind." The interview was not supposed to be pleasant to either party; nevertheless, Madame de Staël continued her adulatory conduct to the Prince. Her undignified and unsuitable marriage sank her to a lamentable degree, and her days closed in troubles, disappointment, and obscurity.

The story of Lady Caroline Lamb, a high-strung, clever, ill-regulated, wilful creature, moves sympathy. Hers was a strange, and, in its ending, tragic career. Her extravagant admiration of the hero of the hour; her mad behaviour at a ball in consequence; the strange novels she wrote in which she and her idol figured;

the patient forbearance of her husband, who bore with her freaks as long as they could be borne; and her unhappy death-bed, when she was reconciled to him, form elements in a wild course, and excite the deepest pity.*

Few events in the history of society caused so deep a sensation as the appearance of Lord Byron. When it is considered he was young, a noble, a poet of the first order, interesting, if not good-looking, and one who was believed to have known strange adventures, this success is not surprising. Further, as is shown by his letters, he possessed *gaieté de cœur*, if not wit, and was lively and entertaining in conversation. It may be said, therefore, that an era at which two such geniuses as Madame de Staël and Lord Byron met in London drawing-rooms was one of special note. The poet used to be merry with his friends on the lady's peculiarities and affectations, and was himself "a lion" quite as great. One scene has been alluded to, which took place at a rout. Another lady of high fashion was found in tears on a sofa at another entertainment, because he had spoken unkindly to her. To a third admirer he addressed a farewell letter, sealed with the seal of the person who had supplanted her—a Mephistopheles touch, significant of his somewhat venomous temper. Nor should we pass by that extraordinary lady, the Margravine of Anspach, Lady Craven, who survived till the year 1828. Her oddities, her theatricals, and her singular and not uninteresting Memoirs, undoubtedly give her a place in the line of remarkable women. She was connected with the Princess of Wales, by furnishing her with Mr. Keppel Craven, her son, as an equerry; while Brandenburg House, her well-known residence at Hammersmith, was occupied by the Princess on the eve of her trial.

Among the oddities of London society must be counted at this time two strange ladies, known for their taste for party-giving, and their eagerness to collect at such entertainments everything remarkable. One of these was the antique Lady Cork, whose husband had been born so long ago as 1742, and who herself had been married in 1786, and who survived full of animation and party-giving till 1840. As is well known, she was a favourite of Dr. Johnson's, with whom she had often a pleasant encounter of wits. Mr. Croker quotes one of her last letters to him, written in 1836, gaily jesting upon the year of her birth. A full account of this old lady would form an entertaining monograph.

The other lady, as eager for party-giving, was the well-known

* Many of her letters, with other details, will be found in the "Memoirs of Lady Morgan." There is also a sketch of her in Mr. McCullagh Torrens's "Life of Lord Melbourne."

Lydia White, and if old age might seem an obstacle to such gaieties in the one instance, helplessness and infirmity might be in the other. But these seem to have only whetted their spirit. "Going to Lydia White's" was a thing which many laughed at and yet few omitted. Sydney Smith's jest of "sacrificing a Tory virgin," is well known. What was presented to the guests was most dispiriting. "Immovable from dropsy, with a swollen person and an emaciated face," says a sarcastic observer, "she is placed on an inclined plane raised high upon a sofa. Yet her spirit was unflagging."

With one of these ruling queens of fashion—Lady Jersey—the Regent's name became associated in a curious way. She was daughter-in-law of the better-known Lady Jersey, and also a conspicuous figure in society. After enjoying the favour of the Regent, she incurred his enmity, which he marked by removing her miniature from a collection of "beauties" he had formed, and sending it back to Mrs. Mee, the painter. Lord Byron, an admirer of the lady, wrote some lines, published in the papers:

> If he, that vain old man, whom truth admits
> Heir of his father's crown and of his wits;
> If his corrupted eye and withered heart
> Could with thy gentle image bear to part.
>
> * * * *
>
> These are not lessen'd, these are still as bright;
> Albeit too dazzling for a dotard's sight;
> And these must wait till every gleam is gone,
> To please the paltry heart that pleases none.

Here was the sequel: At a ball, Mr. Rogers was seated beside her in a long gallery, at the end of which the Regent appeared. He saw the person he so disliked, but it was too late to turn back. He passed her with a defiant stare, which she returned as defiantly, and then whispered: "Didn't I do it well?"

The irrepressible gaiety of the English was displayed even abroad, under the most extraordinary conditions. The *détenus* at Verdun included men of rank and fashion, like Lord Yarmouth, who indulged in a riotous life that scandalised their keepers. Horse-racing, gambling, balls, and wasteful extravagance were kept up as in town.

"We have had a grand fête," says a private letter from Verdun, dated the 22nd August, 1805, "given here on the 12th instant, in honour of the Prince of Wales, by Mrs. Concannon. Her cards were sent out to one hundred and twenty persons, in the same style as in London. The company met at tea, and were conducted into a large room, fitted up as a theatre, where a little piece adapted to the occasion was performed by Englishmen. It was intermixed with French parts, which were performed by the regular actors of the theatre, and a very humorous epilogue,

written by Mr. Concannon, was spoken after it. The play lasted till twelve, when three supper-rooms, with two tables in each, were thrown open. The tables were covered with everything which the season could produce, and the most renowned wines in France. About two o'clock the ball-room was ready; and the ladies and those gentlemen who wished to dance kept up country-dances, reels, and cotillions till six in the morning. The gentlemen who wished to remain at table kept drinking and singing till the same hour, excepting some few who got round the hazard-table. Captain Prescot sang a very humorous song, which terminated with this chorus:

> May we soon arrive on the banks of the Shannon—
> So here's to the health of Mrs. Concannon!

At six we were summoned to the breakfast-room, where tea and coffee kept us till seven, when we all retired to our beds, to be up by two to go to the races.

"Dresses.—The ladies were dressed in a style much beyond what was even seen at Mrs. Concannon's great routs in London: the preparations occupied them a month before, and every town in France, and even in Germany, were laid under contribution. Among the most conspicuous was the Honourable Mrs. Clive, who wore a Vandyke diadem profusely set round with jewels, and the Honourable Mrs. Annesley, who wore a dress which cost at Paris one hundred and fifty guineas. Mrs. Concannon had a beautiful bird of paradise feather, which cost twenty-five guineas."

There were other settlements of a less penal kind, such as Calais, which was always filled with refugee English. At midnight, when mails and passengers are hurrying through, few can conceive of days when it was the special refuge of Englishmen of condition in temporary or permanent straits. There too, by an odd perverseness, they soon found means to raise up a crop of foreign creditors, from whom they found it as difficult to escape as they had done from their English ones. Legends were told of escapes planned with considerable ingenuity. One man of fashion, strictly watched, contrived a daily ride along the sands, immersing his horse's legs in the water, far out, until he ceased to excite suspicion. A well-manned boat from the English coast came in close, into which he leaped, and was rowed away with complete success.* Here went on gaming, and walking on the Place, while the stream of English passing through, and staying at Dessein's, then one of the finest hotels in Europe, furnished

* See the entertaining "Annals of Calais."

pleasant excuse for meeting friends, little dinners, and borrowing money.*

There was also a little corner of Europe, which at this time rose into sudden attraction, and offered a more brilliant scene than it has ever done since. This was the little watering-place of Spa. It has now sunk into a quiet torpor, without having lost any of its natural charms, but the spectacle it presented at the close of the great war must have been a dazzling one.

"In 1818," says Sir H. Holland, "at the time of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, the proximity of the two places brought many diplomatists across the frontier, to the quieter amusements and better atmosphere of Spa; among others the Duke of Wellington and Lord Londonderry, the Duc de Richelieu, Prince Hardenburgh, Prince Dolgorouski, etc. The Emperor Alexander, the

* I may be pardoned for quoting from *The St. James's Gazette* this sketch of my own on the fate of this interesting old hotel: "Until very lately Sterne's Room, No. 31, and Reynolds's portrait of Sir W. Scott over the chimney-piece, were still shown and still used. The whole had an antique air. Dessein, however, passed away with his son, and his son's daughter married Quillacq, who kept the Silver Lion, an old hotel, also with a court, to be found now in the Rue Neuve. Here it was that Hogarth stayed. So lately, however, as 1864, L. Dessein, who was keeping the old Dessein's Hotel, issued an important announcement: 'That after the 1st of January his establishment will be transferred to the Hôtel Quillacq, which has been entirely newly done up and will take the name of Hôtel Dessein. The premises of the old hotel having been purchased by the town of Calais, it ceases to be an hotel.' So accordingly it ceased to be; and in 1874 it was transformed into a museum, with Indian boats, skeletons of birds and fishes, arrows, pictures, etc. It was the occasion of one of those agreeable little French fêtes which are in such harmony with an old town; in 1878 I came by that road once more, and found the old hotel still yellow, and its old trees and gardens still blooming. No one, I fancy, ever asked to see the things of the museum. In 1880 I was once more in old Calais, coming over by moonlight, and with that not unromantic landing at the station, and by one in the morning was standing ringing at Quillacq's. Dessein's was sadly changed from those old busy days. There was hardly another person in the house. They were civil, obliging people, and Madame Dessein, a pleasing old French dame, sat in her parlour and administered. The fare was good and the house comfortable. Overhead, at the roof could be seen the silver lion rampant. I went out betimes to see the old Dessein's in the Rue Leveux, erst Royale. It was pouring rain, and somehow I could not find it. This was set down to forgetfulness. The trial was made again later, but with the same result. The streets did not wear the same look. At last the news was rudely broken to me. In place of Dessein's was to be seen the shell of an enormous brick building, ready but for roofing—a vast communal school, one of M. Ferry's offspring. Dessein's fair gardens, the quaint old hotel, the *remise*, Sterne's room—all had been levelled, and this precious structure reared in its place! And thus there was an end of Dessein's Hotel."

Prince and Princess of Orange, the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, and two or three Prussian princes, were among the numerous other visitors of this year. The Spadois were flattered and enriched by this concourse of princes around the Pouhon Fountain, and by seeing three or four gartered English noblemen every evening at their assembly-rooms and roulette tables. The acting of Mdlle. Mars at the little theatre of Spa graced the season in another way; somewhat past her perfection, but still supreme in the parts she filled. I saw a good deal of the Duc de Richelieu in society; quite enough to tell me that Talleyrand cared more for his *bon mot* than for the truth of his sarcasm, when he eulogised the appointment of the Duke as Prime Minister—'*Il est l'homme de la France qui connoît mieux la Crimée.*' The Duc de Richelieu was a fine specimen of what we are taught, rightly or wrongly, to picture as a French noble of the old school. He, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Londonderry, walking arm-in-arm as I saw them at Spa, would have made an interesting subject for photography had the art then existed. I had a good deal of intercourse with Lord Londonderry at Spa. I saw much too at Spa of Montrond, the friend of Talleyrand; if friendship be the word to denote the link between two men who lived in a common contempt of the feelings and fashions of the world."

BOOK III.

THE KING.—1820–1830.

CHAPTER I.

1820.

At midnight, January 29, 1820, the great bell of St. Paul's announced the death of George III. and the accession of George IV. The good old King was, at last, to close his weary, suffering life, and, for so many years dead to reason and sight, to shuffle off with that life the mere semblance of royalty.

The Regent had been too ill to attend his father's death-bed, over which the Duke of York, his favourite son, we are told, "hung with the most affectionate solicitude." But Sir William Knighton was with him on the night when the news arrived from Windsor, and testifies that it was received "with a burst of grief that was very affecting." His situation presently became most critical. At his favourite residence, Brighton, he had caught a cold, for which he lost eighty ounces of blood. But on the night of Tuesday, February 1, a fresh attack coming on, he was almost in danger of suffocation. Sir Henry Halford was absent, and had left directions that there was to be no further bleeding till his return. The cautious Knighton was afraid to disobey, and Mr. Grenville states that he might have died but for Bloomfield's sending for Tierney, who promptly took fifty ounces of blood from him, almost bleeding him to death. It was believed that, but for this step, he would have followed his father on the second or third day of his reign. In all these attacks, his fine constitution, not yet shattered, helped him to rally. It was characteristic of his effusive nature, which for the time was even affectionate, that, in the moments of his greatest danger, he despatched expresses to his dear friend, Lord Wellesley,

with messages as to his state. By the 17th he was restored, and receiving addresses from the City of London. "Sheriff Perkins" declared that his Majesty was one of the most robust-looking men in the kingdom. "His limbs," he added, "retain their fine proportions, and his eye its wonted vivacity." But at the Council less partial judges declared that he was "very weak and tottering."

THE KING TO LOUIS XVIII. AND OTHER SOVEREIGNS.

"Sir, my Brother,

"Amidst my own and the public grief for the loss of his late Majesty, my most honoured father, of blessed memory, whom it pleased God to release from the sufferings of a long illness on the evening of the twenty-ninth instant, at thirty-five minutes past eight o'clock, I cannot omit giving your Majesty the earliest intelligence of the event, being convinced that you will participate in the concern which I feel upon this melancholy occasion. Upon my ascending the throne of this imperial kingdom, I renew to your Majesty the assurance of my constant desire to cultivate and maintain that amity and good correspondence which so happily subsists between our two crowns; and that I will not be wanting on my part in anything that may tend to the advancement of the prosperity and welfare of your dominions. And so, wishing your Majesty health, peace, and true felicity, I am, with the highest esteem,

"Sir, my Brother, your Majesty's affectionate Brother,

"George R.

"Given at my Palace of Carlton House, the 31st day of January, 1820. To my good brother the most Christian King."*

At the Privy Council, on the customary oath being taken, his Majesty made the following declaration:

"I have directed that you should be assembled here, in order that I may discharge the painful duty of announcing to you the death of the King, my beloved father.

"It is impossible for me adequately to express the state of my feelings upon this melancholy occasion; but I have the consolation of knowing that the severe calamity with which his Majesty has been afflicted for so many years, has never effaced

* This document, written on a quarto sheet of paper with gilt edges, has somehow found its way into the British Museum. It is in the nature of a circular letter, and is merely signed by the King.

from the minds of his subjects the impressions created by his many virtues; and his example will, I am persuaded, live for ever in the grateful remembrance of his country.

"Called upon, in consequence of his Majesty's indisposition, to exercise the prerogatives of the crown on his behalf, it was the first wish of my heart to be allowed to restore into his hands the powers with which I was entrusted. It has pleased Almighty God to determine otherwise; and I have not been insensible to the advantages which I have derived from administering, in my dear father's name, the government of this realm.

"The support which I have received from Parliament and the country, in times the most eventful, and under the most arduous circumstances, could alone inspire me with that confidence which my present station demands.

"The experience of the past will, I trust, satisfy all classes of my people, that it will ever be my most anxious endeavour to promote their prosperity and happiness, and to maintain unimpaired the religion, laws, and liberties of the kingdom."

It was naturally desirable that the first step taken should be to close the unseemly chapter of nearly forty years' pecuniary embarrassments and scandals. This delicate task was undertaken by his confidential friend Knighton, who devoted himself to it for the next ten years with infinite pains, carrying it out with an inflexible severity, which made him incur the displeasure, if not dislike, of his royal master; not the least disagreeable part being the undertaking distant journeys on "delicate missions" in the depth of winter. It is stated that the old debt to the Duke of Orleans was now cleared off with interest, together with other long-standing encumbrances, while the King himself eagerly pressed his ministers for a substantial addition to the Civil List, which, he maintained, was inadequate for his state. They refused—declaring that the settlement must be considered a settlement for the reign, though they held out a hope that some special grant might be made in the future. It was curious to find the King thus renewing the old attempts of the Prince, and clamouring for "increased allowance." When the new Parliament met, he was able in his speech to "congratulate the nation on there being no addition to the burdens on the people." On this occasion he sat on the "new throne," arrayed "in purple and gold." The next step was to dispose of his Queen.

He had discovered a convenient ally and instrument—a pliant lawyer, who seems to have been the only man of position and ability who adopted and favoured his plans. This was Leach, already his Chancellor of Cornwall, and who looked to a highe

reward. All the reports of the spies abroad with the more respectable communications of Lord Exmouth and Sir C. Stuart, had been gradually accumulating, and this adroit partisan suggested that it was time that some action should be taken upon these materials.* From him and Lord Liverpool we learn how the first step was arranged, and that in 1818 commissioners had been sent out to Milan to collect evidence. In Mr. Grey-Bennett's diary some account is given of the persons to whom this delicate task was entrusted.

"I have read a letter from Sir John Leach, the Regent's Chancellor for the Duchy of Cornwall, to Lord Essex, which gives the following particulars: Late in the autumn of 1817 (after the Princess Charlotte's death), a large parcel of papers was laid before him (Sir J. L.) by order of the King, a considerable part of which came from the Foreign Office. After having perused them, he recommended an inquiry to be instituted; and, accordingly, with the full consent and approbation of some of the ministers, such as the Lord Chancellor, Lord Liverpool, and Lord Castlereagh, one was nominated, consisting of Mr. Cooke (a Chancery lawyer), Mr. Powell (an attorney), and Captain Brown (a creature of Lord Stewart's), Lord Castlereagh's brother, then our ambassador at Vienna. This commission assembled at Milan, in September, 1818, and transmitted, from time to time, copies of the evidence, as they collected it, to Sir John Leach, who sent them to Lord Liverpool. They returned to England, and made their report in July, 1819. Leach's defence consists in his denial that he ever communicated with them, or with anyone else upon the subject, while he was on the Continent (of which he was accused), the commission not assembling at Milan till he left it. Of the character of these commissioners it may be necessary here to say a few words. Mr. Cooke bears a very good reputation as a Chancery lawyer."

Sir J. Leach, this instrument, was a suitable character, with a strange reserve and ambition. "How often have I seen him," says an old solicitor, "when walking through the Green Park, knock at the private door at the back of Carlton Palace. I have seen him go in four or five days following." And there was something significant in his mode of dispensing law. Two large fan-shades were placed in such a position as not only to screen the light from the Master's eyes but to render him invisible to the court. After the counsel who was addressing the court had finished and resumed his seat, there would be an awful pause for a minute or two; when at length, out of the darkness which sur-

* To present all these proceedings in a continuous form I have reserved for this place the preliminary discussions and arrangements.

rounded the chair of justice would come a voice, distinct, awful, solemn, but with the solemnity of suppressed anger: "The bill is dismissed with costs." No explanations, no long series of arguments were advanced to support this conclusion.

One Vimercati, an Italian lawyer, was local manager and employed to hunt up evidence, and when it was known that the English Court was eager to obtain evidence, the "raffish" miscellany of Italian scamps, menials, *valets de place*—never a high type—virtually received an invitation to fit what they had to tell to the standard that was required.

The instigator of the scheme at once received his reward. At Christmas, 1817, he was made Vice-Chancellor, "on the distinct nomination of the Prince Regent himself," Mr. Twiss tells us, Lord Eldon having nothing to do with the matter. That eminent Tory's scruples did not stand in the way. The Regent, for ends of his own, was then calling him his dearest friend, and imploring him not to desert him; and as the public was clamouring for his resignation this appeal became of value. Why the Regent was so anxious not to be "deserted" will be now seen. It is also a little significant that Sir W. Scott, the Chancellor's brother, was heard to remark that the late death of the Princess Charlotte had removed the only objection to the divorce. His "dear young master" had addressed him:

THE REGENT TO LORD ELDON.

"My dear friend [he wrote on January 1st, 1818], it must always be a mortifying as well as painful circumstance to me, whenever I am deprived the pleasure of your society; but when I learn the reason of such privation, that it is to be attributed to bodily indisposition, arising entirely from distress of mind, it is then truly that I do tenfold regret the absence of my friend, and that I do feel more deeply for him than I can find words to express. Perhaps (and in addition to what I have just written) there never was a moment when (and in which also from private and personal reasons towards myself) I not only could have regretted and lamented your absence more or so much as that late one (but when I at the same time am sensible that you could not possibly come to me); for you cannot fail to know how much I depend upon you at all times, and how firmly I rely upon your support and affection in whatever can concern my tranquillity, my happiness, and my honour. You cannot, therefore, be surprised (much difficulty in point of delicacy being now set aside in my mind by the late melancholy event which has taken place in my family) if I therefore turn my whole thoughts to the endeavouring to extricate myself from the cruellest, as well as the most

unjust predicament, that ever even the lowest individual, much more a prince, ever was placed in by unshackling myself from a woman who —— . . . . Is it, then, my dear friend, to be tolerated that . . . . is to be suffered to continue to bear my name, to belong to me and to the country, and that that country, the first in all the world, and myself its sovereign, are to be expected to submit silently to a degradation, under which no upright and honourable mind can exist? This, then, was my main object for collecting certain of my confidential servants here. . . . I shall now take my leave of you, wishing you from my heart many happy returns of the season, and assuring you that if it depends upon me alone, your happiness should never know interruption.

"I remain, my dear Friend,

"Always most affectionately yours,

"GEORGE, P. R.

"P.S.—I hope that you will be able to make out this scrawl."

But it is now that Mr. Brougham begins to occupy so conspicuous a figure in these transactions—though his behaviour at this stage was always deemed perplexing. There can be no doubt that the Princess was thoroughly alarmed by the fact of the inquisition that was held at Milan, and was unequal to maintain the struggle at such odds. Her friends, too, felt that on every account it was desirable she should remain abroad. This was the view of the ministers—in short, there was but one person in the kingdom who was eager to disturb or annoy her.

In this view Mr. Brougham addressed a letter to Lord Hutchinson, a friend of both contending parties, suggesting an arrangement, which he was not authorised to make, but which he seemed to say he had influence enough to persuade her to accept, on the terms of a formal separation, no coronation or title of Queen, and an annuity for life. He added that he thought this would be most comfortable for her, as since her daughter's death she would not desire to return. This sensible proposal was not accepted, for the reason that at that moment a most singular discussion was going on between the Regent and his ministers. The report of the Milan commission had come to hand, and the Prince was filled with a sort of passionate ill-regulated longing to take action on it. They pressed on him as reasonable the proposals contained in the letter, assuring him that any notion of divorce, such as he suggested "by arrangement," was out of the question. On this he replied, saying that they had misunderstood him, that he intended there should be due proofs of guilt, and put it to them whether, for the purpose of "arrangement," there could be any essential difference between divorce and the sort of

separation they referred to, and whether the party who would propose the one would not accept the other ?*

In about a fortnight, on July 10th, ministers at once took into consideration the report of the commission. A couple of weeks later, with this unexpected information before them, they addressed the Regent in a remarkable minute : †

"According to these opinions your Royal Highness's servants are led to believe that the facts stated in the papers which have been referred to them would furnish sufficient proof of the crime, provided they were established by credible witnesses ; but it is at the same time the opinion of your Royal Highness's confidential servants that, considering the manner in which a great part of this testimony has unavoidably been obtained, and the circumstance that the persons who have afforded it are foreigners, many of whom appear to be in a low station of life, it would not be possible to advise your Royal Highness to institute any legal proceeding upon such evidence, without further inquiry as to the characters and circumstances of the witnesses by whom it is to be supported."

Then they considered the various courses of proceeding—high treason, suit in the ecclesiastical courts, and found the most serious objections to all.

"They are satisfied that evidence which in a common case, and before the ordinary tribunals, would be deemed fully sufficient, would, in a proceeding of this kind, be received with the greatest suspicion, particularly where the witnesses happened to be foreigners; and they doubt the success of any application to Parliament upon such a transaction, except in a case in which the testimony was so unexceptionable, clear, and distinct, as to be subject to no reasonable doubt. Most of the objections above stated would not apply to the third proposition—a proceeding for high treason. Such a proceeding would be considered as conformable to the due course of law. But on the other hand, it must be observed that the difficulties of obtaining sufficient evidence of the crime of high treason are greater than in any other criminal proceeding, and it would certainly not be advisable to institute it, if there did not exist the highest probability of success. Upon the whole of this question your Royal Highness's

* As these papers are evidently not the Regent's own composition, but written by Sir J. Leach, the substance is merely given.

† Mr. Roebuck states ("History," i. 9), "on the highest authority," that the Whig party conveyed to Lord Liverpool an intimation that, if the King dismissed him and his friends for refusing to prosecute the Queen, they would decline to take office, even though this condition were waived. This does not seem very credible.

confidential servants beg leave most humbly to state their opinion as decidedly adverse to any proceeding being attempted in the ecclesiastical courts."

We venture to say that this document, to which attention has scarcely been sufficiently directed, is as damaging a piece of evidence against the Regent's ministers as could be conceived. For here was their deliberate opinion as to the value of the evidence on which they later brought the Queen to trial. It shows, indeed, how flexible were their principles. In fact, the effect of this remonstrance was complete, and the Regent, for the moment baffled, accepted their opinion.

Lord Hutchinson, however, pressed the Government to close with Mr. Brougham's offer, assuring them that he would not have made it unless certain to carry it out, but the matter was dropped; and we may imagine the Regent was in no humour to accept. This, too, may have been caused by a sudden threat of the Princess to Lord Liverpool that she would come to England. From this she was dissuaded. But if ever a woman was driven to action by harsh and wantonly stupid treatment, it was this unfortunate lady. For now there began a series of petty slights and insults at foreign courts, all prompted by the English ministers of the Prince. At Vienna, Paris, Rome, she encountered this form of insult, as though she was some pretender or impostor, all being obsequiously eager to gratify the Regent. She had completed all her restless peregrinations, having made a very important and interesting tour, and seen a great deal of the world. A slight matter will show the spirit of the proceedings adopted towards her—a charge that she was seen to enter places of Catholic worship and kneel down.

But the arrival of both parties at the throne made a most important change. As was natural with one of the King's character, the possession of power suggested immediate deliverance from the yoke which he chafed against; and almost at once, before he escaped his critical illness, the old frenzy seized on him. He was for divorcing his Queen at once, and ten days had scarcely passed from his father's death, before he was again embroiled with his ministers on this thorny subject. Apart from his own dislike, there was the feeling that she had been elevated with him, and the instinct that her power for annoyance and battle had increased. As Princess she might be ignored; but her new situation as Queen of England promised difficulties and embarrassments of the most painful kind. Whether recognised or not, she was sure to be found intolerable.

The strange frantic mode in which the King, after a fortnight,

pressed this matter, introduces us to a most characteristic episode. His *âme damnée* in this matter, Leach, was despatched to the Chancellor to operate on the Cabinet with threats of the King's retirement to Hanover—not likely to have any effect upon them—and hints of dismissal, perhaps more potent; and it was urged that the King's state of health, agitation of mind, and the like, all required that his wishes should be carried out. Their views, however, could not have given him satisfaction,* and were embodied in a minute of Cabinet dated February 10. This most important document again sets out the deliberate judgment of ministers, based on the Milan evidence and the "supplementary evidence," which had been got together to strengthen the first, and it was to the effect that a divorce was impracticable, chiefly on the ground of recrimination which it would open, and which could not be shut on account of the legal difficulties; and above all, for this very remarkable reason:

"This evidence [they say] would indeed establish the fact, if not rebutted or discredited; but notwithstanding the supplementary evidence which has since been obtained, your servants must beg to refer to the opinion which they gave in their minute of the 24th of July last, "that this body of testimony consists almost exclusively of the evidence of foreigners, most of them not above the rank of menial servants, or that of masters and attendants in hotels, wholly unacquainted with the English language, and some of the former class standing in the questionable situation of having been dismissed or removed from her Royal Highness's service.

"Your servants are not insensible to the obstacles which may have arisen to any attempt, made according to their advice, to ascertain what was likely to be the evidence of the several English persons of both sexes who had been living in the family of the Princess of Wales. But to proceed in ignorance as to the probable effect of such testimony would, they submit, be hazardous; particularly as your servants have reason to believe that some of those persons of rank and station at present in friendly correspondence with the Princess profess an interest in all that concerns her."

Thus they again put on record their opinion of the worthlessness of the evidence on which they later founded their proceedings, and which *then*, they maintained, was convincing; and they also furnish, by anticipation, another damaging

* Letter of Lord Eldon, "Life of Lord Liverpool," p. 24, where will be found much of the information quoted in this episode.

fact against themselves; for these "several English persons of both sexes," to whom they allude, actually testified in the most favourable way for her. So that, if favourable, their evidence was to be excluded; if the reverse, sought for.

Further, they held out to the King that the only feasible course was to arrange matters so that the Queen—or "Princess," as they ludicrously styled her through the document—should be prevented returning, and thus shadowed out a sort of measure which, through the leverage of the annuity, which had now lapsed, as well as of the scandals, etc., might be effectual. They would advise that she should not be admitted to "the honours of coronation," and that her name should be omitted from the Liturgy. Owning that it was indeed "a chain of difficulties," they, in conclusion, almost abjectly "implored his Majesty's indulgent construction of everything which they may appear to have said amiss."

Mr. Canning gave his adhesion, but, taking a curious distinction, declared he could not have agreed to the omission of her name from the Liturgy had any penal process been contemplated. This was no doubt intended as forewarning, and it was felt necessary to *ménager* the King in his present excited state.

He replied in a long argument not of his own composition. The ministers rejoined, reiterating in the strongest terms the objections to the divorce and to the characters of the witnesses.

Thus, crossed in his plans, the King gave way to the most intemperate behaviour. We find Lord Sidmouth, when apologising for not answering a letter: "If you knew how the day (the 12th) was passed, you would not be surprised at the omission. The Government is in a very strange and precarious state." Mr. Greville even heard that they had all resigned, and reports some extraordinary behaviour on the part of the King—such as ordering Lord Liverpool out of the room, asking him "if he knew to whom he was speaking?" On which that nobleman replied with dignity: "Sir, I know that I am speaking to my sovereign, and I believe I am addressing him as it becomes a loyal subject to do." The King sneered at the Chancellor, saying "that his conscience always interfered except where his interest was concerned"—a speech probably true in the main. As was to be expected, this vehemence soon gave place to timidity. He apologised to the Prime Minister, and we are not surprised to find that he yielded the whole matter in dispute. The difficulty was thus composed, both parties fancying that there was little more to be done than settle the terms of the arrangement.

The "Cato Street Conspiracy"—the most incredible attempt

known in modern London life, and which exceeded in daring and villany the schemes of foreign assassins like Orsini—now occupied public thought.

One singular feature of the political life of this time deserves notice. It might be said that at no other period were the risks of violence and actual bloodshed so curiously associated with the careers of political men and men in high position. We have even the spectacle of three statesmen of high mark perishing by their own hands, viz. Lord Castlereagh, Sir Samuel Romilly, and Mr. Whitbread. The catalogue might be further added to by the fates of Mr. Huskisson and of Sir Robert Peel.

Ministers, like the King himself, found themselves exposed to the revengeful attack of persons suffering from a morbid sense of grievance; and the assassination of Mr. Perceval, and the later marvellous escape of Lord Palmerston, struck by a bullet, but unwounded, showed what perils were incident to high office. But the most extraordinary attempt of this kind was the desperate "Thistlewood Conspiracy." It became known in London one morning that a band of some fifteen or twenty desperate men had planned the assassination of the whole ministry, seizing the happy occasion when they were gathered at dinner at the Foreign Secretary's, securing admittance through the pretext of delivering a letter to the servant. The details were worked out in thorough fashion. Lord Harrowby had invited nearly the whole ministry to dine at his house in Grosvenor Square, due notice of which had found its way into the papers. Thistlewood and his band—which included butchers, shoemakers, and others—who had been arranging a general plan of assassination, seized on this favourable opportunity. They had been holding meetings in a stable loft, in Cato Street, Paddington, and had there gathered a store of guns, swords, hand grenades, with a stock of ammunition; and the plan agreed upon was that one of the band, about nine o'clock, should knock at Lord Harrowby's door with a letter, and when presenting it, should rush into the dining-room and massacre the ministers. The town was then to be fired. Some courageous police arrested these desperate men when armed and about to execute their scheme, and an affray followed in which one of the officers was killed. The scene at the execution had a sort of dramatic interest as much from the sympathy exhibited by the crowd, who raised a shout when the doomed men appeared on the scaffold, as from the strange remark of Thistlewood to his neighbour: "We shall soon know the grand secret!" A reporter, with an enterprise worthy of later times, forced himself close to the leading criminal, and addressed him: "Mr. Thistlewood, if you have any remarks to make I shall be happy to take them down and convey

them to the public." The reply was a look of extraordinarily mixed contempt.*

This sympathy of the people—also displayed with more significant indecency at the funeral of the unhappy Lord Castlereagh, when dead cats were flung at the remains and other indignities attended them—was another universal feature of the time. We have seen how the Regent was periodically attended in his progresses by hootings and yells, and even the venerable Queen was mobbed and spat upon. This was owing to the system of repression instituted by Lord Sidmouth—with the six Acts and other engines of oppression, and above all to a hateful system of spies and informers. One Edwards, an image maker, whose introduction to the Government Mr. Charles Knight gives an account of in his pleasing "Autobiography," with Oliver and others, had done useful service in these transactions.

This had the effect not merely of alarming the King, but rousing his effusive sensibilities for one of his ministers, Lord Sidmouth,† whose severities of administration had his sympathies. He was by this time at Brighton, whence a series of encouraging despatches almost daily reached the ministers, with high praise of the "zeal and vigilance you have displayed, and which were now unfolding themselves in the detection of crimes which have brought our land to the condition heretofore reserved only for revolutionary France."

THE KING TO SIR W. KNIGHTON.

"Carlton House, Friday night, or rather Saturday morning,
"May 12–13, 1820.

"My dear Knighton,

"Let me entreat of you, if you possibly can, to call upon me to-morrow morning, if your health will in any way admit of it, at latest by eleven o'clock. I am so overburthened that I must absolutely see you.

"Always most affectionately yours,
"G. R.

* Many years after these events, when Mr. W. Curran was with Lord Anglesey at Beaudesert, the latter showed his guest a strange walking-stick, which, on pressing various springs, shot forth a sword at the extremity, with two cutting weapons also at right angles; while a third piece of mechanism in the handle produced a dagger and pistol. This formidable, but embarrassing, weapon had been designed by the Duke of York after the Thistlewood conspiracy, and he had some fifty or sixty made of the pattern, for presentation to the ministers and other leading personages.

† "The King's remark," writes Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, "on your letter of this morning, was, 'He is the Duke of Wellington upon home service'"—a compliment which strikes the very amusing Dean Pellew as "peculiarly felicitous."

"P.S.—B—— tells me that he has obeyed my orders in writing to you to the same effect; but I cannot, notwithstanding, resist writing this short line myself."

We must turn to the new Queen of England, whom the late King's death found at Leghorn, Mr. Brougham having despatched Sicard, her steward, with the news. She had been staying at Marseilles. She had thought of going on to Paris; but a significant hint having been conveyed to her from the ambassador, that the capital would be made disagreeable to her, she proceeded instead to Rome, where, in answer to her request, a guard of honour was posted at her door, but withdrawn suddenly. She made a protest against this treatment, on which Cardinal Consalvi replied that the Pope would not accede to it, on the ground that "at Rome it was not the custom thus to honour royal personages travelling incognito, and that he had had no official announcement from the English Court of her having become Queen." This was, of course, but a thinly-veiled pretext, the truth being that the Hanoverian minister, Reding, had made the strongest remonstrances, and used pressure which it was impossible to resist. This proceeding could scarcely have affected her subsequent behaviour; and it was no doubt the news that her name had been struck out of the Liturgy —a first step, as she fancied, towards deposing her—that drove her into asserting her rights. But first she wrote to Lord Liverpool from Rome, on March 16th, a characteristic appeal which began: "The Queen of this Relams wishes to be informed through the medium of Lord Liverpool, First Minister to the King of this Relams, for which reason or motife the Queen's name has been left out of the Liturgy."

Here, then, was the speedy fruit of their first blunder; for this "leaving her name out of the Liturgy" was a trivial, unmeaning act, dealing with a matter of form and routine which committed none of the parties.*

The poor lady had hard work to get away from Rome. The French ambassador declined to *viser* her passport, and the English consul, "with trembling hand, much afraid of lossing his place, at last was obliged to give me a pas-port;" while she considered the Cardinal's behaviour "violent and impertinent" in directing the post-masters to find horses for "*Princess* Caroline of England."

* It might be urged, the more need she had of the nation's prayers if she were as vile as it was imputed she was. It might be said, too, that she was still included in the prayers for "all the Royal Family," or, as it was touched so finely by one of her counsel, in the prayer for the fatherless and persecuted.

She accordingly set out on her journey home, reaching Geneva about May 15th. She sent home a demand for Buckingham House, or in case of refusal, some mansion near Dover. Sicard, the faithful courier, had been despatched home with letters to Mr. Brougham, inviting him to come to Geneva; but was sent back to her by the ambassador at Paris with letters to her, he himself forwarding hers by his own messenger. She was roused up in the middle of the night by his arrival, and then sent off a new courier with complaints of this extraordinary proceeding, and a fresh summons to Mr. Brougham to come and meet her at some French port, as more convenient. She was in a fever of excitement, and at once set out on her journey. She was agreeably surprised at Montbard by the arrival of Alderman Wood and Lady Anne Hamilton—the last one of her most faithful and disinterested adherents. The progress of the party along the French posting was not without the grotesqueness which seemed to attend the poor lady's proceedings. The train consisted of five carriages. A calash, in which sat Alderman Wood and Count Vasali, led the way. The yellow English posting-chariot, with the royal arms and "C. P. W." on the panels followed, containing the Queen, Lady Anne Hamilton, and "a fine little female child, about three years old, whom her Majesty, in conformity with her benevolent practices on former occasion, has adopted." Then came three others, containing Mr. William Austin, "Mr. Wood, junior," and servants. There were various accidents and annoyances; her leaders falling, the post-masters showing a disinclination to supply horses, one hiding himself. On another occasion plough-horses had to be impressed and ridden for the stage by the carters.

At last she reached St. Omer, where she halted till the courier should return with news of Mr. Brougham, also sending on couriers to London with demands for a royal yacht to take her over.

This Alderman Wood, who now appears on the scene, has been described as a linendraper with whom the Queen had dealt; but this seems an invidious mode of describing a person who had been Lord Mayor of London, and was now a member of Parliament. He was no doubt a "City man," with a certain forwardness, and perhaps vulgarity; but he certainly devoted himself to her cause with zeal and loyalty, while the credit of the son, Sir W. Page Wood, might be brought in aid of the respectability of the father.

While she was thus hurrying home, her adviser and agent, Mr. Brougham, had been engaged—unknown to her—in a singular and equivocal negotiation. He was sent for by Lord Liverpool immediately after his heated struggle with the King; and it was suggested that terms might now be made. They were

willing to treat. Mr. Brougham, who certainly had no instructions, gave up the Liturgy point; and on the question of her having law officers, he declared that by appointing *him* a King's counsel he might thus be prevented assuming those functions! Lord Hutchinson, formerly a friend of the King's, was now joined in the negotiations, and to him Mr. Brougham revealed the anger and jealousy which the departure of Alderman Wood had roused in him. He styled him "ass and alderman, whom they call Thistle Wood," and suggested that the Carlton House newspapers should open on him a shower of squibs and ridicule, on the score of his having a job to do."*

As the Queen was now drawing nearer to England, the King intervened, and desired that both should go over and meet her, while Lord Liverpool furnished Mr. Brougham with a memorandum of the Government terms—which were an allowance of £50,000 a year, provided neither the title nor prerogatives of a Queen were assumed, save that of appointing law officers. The King also showed his eagerness that the two envoys should set out at once; and all was in train when, on the day before his departure, Brougham suddenly informed Lord Liverpool that he reserved the right of *giving her advice*—apparently the opposite of that which he was undertaking to give—should he find that her situation required it. And on the day they left London, Lord Liverpool must have been confounded at receiving a notice to the effect that his (Brougham's) situation was a most delicate one, and that whatever might be his feelings, it might be that he would have actually to advise her to come to England! It was plain that he wished to have two courses open to him, and Lord Liverpool ought to have at once withdrawn the commission from so doubtful an agent. What confusion arose out of his proceeding will be seen.

On June 2nd the party landed at Calais. The little town was in a fever of excitement, the English holding meetings at the Silver Lion (Hogarth's inn). They reached St. Omer the following day, where Mr. Brougham was at once received by her. He spent two hours with her, and a courier at once set out to bear Mr. Brougham's views to Lord Liverpool. That nobleman then saw how he had been duped. Mr. Brougham informed him that the Queen was determined to proceed to England, and plainly said he thought her justified in doing so from the treatment she had received on her travels. He declared the only way of stopping her was to give her that title of Queen which he had come out specially to ask her to forego!

* There is a letter of Mr. Brougham, in which he speaks opprobriously of this "d——d woman" coming back to plague them all!

"From this your lordship will perceive that I have not ventured even to hint at the renunciation proposed by your lordship; indeed, I never deemed that at all within the possibility of the case, and I am now certain that the bare mention of the thing would have been followed within five minutes by an order of post-horses to go to Calais. Lord Hutchinson, however, though he has been prevailed on to defer this proposition, means soon to make it. Your lordship may further perceive from this letter that my own opinion is now decided, both as to what can be accomplished and what I ought to advise. In the peculiarly delicate situation in which I stand, I must be as explicit as possible with your lordship, and therefore, relying on your secrecy, I shall state it. If it be only her Majesty's intention to go once to England for a few weeks, I am decidedly against any such plan, because I see nothing but mischief in such a proceeding. But in order to enable me to turn her aside from it, I must add that I see most plainly the necessity of your lordship giving either Lord Hutchinson or myself the assurance above alluded to; and, as a day's delay can only bring Lord Hutchinson's application to the same effect, I think the risk of her Majesty's setting out before the answer to it arrives may be lessened by my writing this letter."

It will be seen he made no mention of the handsome bribe of £50,000 a year which he was empowered to offer, and which might have had its effect. After, indeed, suppressing the character in which he had come, he with consummate art shifted the whole to the shoulders of Lord Hutchinson, informing her that "he had reason to believe that nobleman had brought over a proposition from the King," and requiring him to produce it. The other declared—for he was not allowed to see her—that he bore none; but that he would try and gather it from what Lord Liverpool had said to him; he was able to repeat the terms of Brougham's commission, with the addition, which he apologised humbly for mentioning, that the instant she landed, Government would proceed against her. Mr. Brougham—now become the Queen's agent in the matter—was commanded to decline these terms. This was at five o'clock. She instantly quitted the room, and Mr. Brougham saw her, to his surprise, driving out of the courtyard. (He forgot, however, that in his own letter he declared for her that she would only wait till five.) She set off at full speed for Calais. He sent couriers after her with letters imploring her to be cautious, but adding that he did not advise her to accept the proposition made, unless she was allowed to retain her title as Queen, with due acknowledgment from all

agents abroad, etc.; in short, everything opposed to what he had undertaken to urge. To the minister he sent off despatches "most secret," repeating the same thing, declaring that "the spirit which had guided him all through was merely to save annoyance," and talking of "the duty he owed to his client," and concluding with a declaration of sorrow for the failure of his negotiation, and of his readiness to lend his aid again, if it were renewed.

No wonder Lord Liverpool considered he had been tricked. In the recriminations that followed, he maintained that Brougham "substantially approved" the memorandum intrusted to him, and that he, and he alone, was the bearer and negotiator.*

"It is a curious circumstance, and contributed not a little to excite the Queen's suspicions of Brougham at the time, that Lord Hutchinson's letter was in the handwriting of Brougham's brother, who had accompanied them, acting as secretary to his brother. On giving it to the Queen, Brougham told her it was an inadmissible proposition, and that she could not accept it. The moment the Queen read it she expressed the greatest indignation, and requested Brougham's opinion, who said that he certainly did not advise her Majesty to accept those conditions, at the same time her Majesty best knew her own situation, and he entreated her to consider what propositions she might accept. The Queen then said she would go immediately to England." Thus Mr. G. Bennett.

We hurry after the excited Queen posting along the high road

* See the "queries and answers," dated the 10th of June, "Life of Lord Liverpool," vol. iii. p. 59. Lord Hutchinson's naive bewilderment at the part he had been made to play is well shown in his communication to Lord Liverpool: "I learnt, to my great surprise, from Mr. Brougham, but not until late last night, that he had made a communication to your lordship through Mr. Fonblanque, dated the 3rd inst. When Mr. Brougham left me yesterday morning at eleven o'clock to go to the Queen, he did not appear to be at all aware that her Majesty meant to act in the precipitate manner she had done. His first letter (marked No. 1) therefore came upon me quite unexpectedly. I did not exactly comprehend the meaning of it. I thought his object was that I should write something that might pacify the mind of the Queen for the moment, and enable us both to gain time. I was induced to make my last proposition by a private hint from Mr. Brougham; she did not receive it until she had left St. Omer, but it was forwarded to her to Calais, and I understand that she received it when she was on board the packet ready to sail for England, I am now to observe to you that in the whole of this negotiation, Mr. Brougham, as far as my judgment enables me to go, does not appear to have possessed the smallest degree of power, weight, or authority over the mind of the Queen. To speak to you in confidence, I think that her violence and determination subdued him, and that he failed in making the slightest impression upon her. He may be, and I daresay has been, most sincere; but as for influence, if it did ever exist, there certainly was no appearance of it on the present occasion."

to Calais, which she reached that night, and then went on board the packet. This precipitation was owing to the fear that the means might be found to detain her. She had dismissed her strange suite of Italians, including the whiskered Bergami, and was now to trust herself to English service. The alderman was busy sending off despatches by special boat, to prepare his wife for the august visitor who had agreed to accept their hospitality at South Audley Street. The English consul sent off a courier with the alarming news.

She did not start till the following morning, reaching Dover about noon, where she was exhilarated by the honour of a royal salute—quite unexpected—thundering out from the castle. The commandant, having no instructions to the contrary, felt himself bound to follow the usual course. The whole town lined the shores, and though the tide did not allow the vessel to enter the harbour, the intrepid lady insisted on entering a small boat and getting ashore. Now began those extraordinary ovations and progresses which were to mark her course and delight her soul. Amid roars and acclamations she walked through Snargate Street, arrayed in the broad hat and pelisse which were to be so familiar to the public. Wright's Hotel had the honour of receiving her, and from this house she departed in the evening, the crowd drawing her carriage. At Canterbury there were torches lit, fresh shouting, and addresses. She stayed the night, and next day proceeded by Gravesend to London; the singular feature being, that as she drew near the metropolis, her progress became a vast cavalcade, from the number of mounted persons who joined her. She did not reach town till seven o'clock, when the tremendous acclamations as she passed over Westminster Bridge conveyed to the House of Commons and his Majesty's ministers the news of her arrival. She passed by Charing Cross to South Audley Street—the streets almost impassable, every window filled with eager faces and waving handkerchiefs. In short, scenes that were to be repeated *ad nauseam* for the next few months.

To the genuine heroine this sort of exhibition is odious. Mr. Grenville, who rode out to Greenwich to meet her, describes the scene. Carriages, carts, and horsemen followed, preceded, and surrounded her coach all the way. The alderman was seated in the place of honour, while the Duke of Hamilton's sister "sat backwards." This undignified proceeding caused the King to express himself with oaths and other unbecoming language. As she passed White's Club, she turned and smiled to the members in the window. Arrived at Audley Street, she appeared on the balcony, to the delight of the surging mob, who celebrated her arrival by breaking the windows of obnoxious persons, such as

Lords Sidmouth and Castlereagh, as well as Lady Hertford's in Manchester Square, filling the air even with yells of "To Carlton House!" where soldiers had to be posted. Citizens in her neighbourhood were required to illuminate. This was but the inauguration of a period of confusion and disorder, which lasted till the trial was over. But on news of her coming the ministers had made up their minds. Not an instant was lost in taking action.

The following day, the much-talked-of "green bag," a portentous receptacle supposed to be filled with horrifying evidence of culpable behaviour, was solemnly carried down to Parliament, and the question whether it was to be opened, and its unsavoury contents emptied, was to exercise the Houses for some time. A message from the King invited the House of Lords to consider those papers with all "serious attention." A Secret Committee was named. To the House of Commons the Queen addressed her message, skilfully drawn up, in which she declared that she had been induced to return, in consequence of the measures pursued against her honour and peace by secret agents abroad, to defend her character. She added solemnly that she was ready to meet her accusers openly, and protested against any "secret tribunal," and their examination of documents "privately prepared by adversaries, a proceeding unknown to the laws of the land." The insulting measures taken against her should only have been attempted after trial and conviction.

A discussion followed, in which Mr. Brougham vehemently stood forward in the capacity of her champion, and vindicated his own recent proceedings. The impression on all sides, and it is pleasing to find that such good sense leavened that great assembly, was that everything should be done to arrange matters, and avoid touching the portentous green bag. Mr. Wilberforce carried all with him in proposing an adjournment for the purpose of trying an accommodation. The Queen, no doubt yielding to good advice, having moved to Lady Anne Hamilton's house in Portman Square, on the evening of the 9th informed Lord Liverpool that she was willing to receive any proposal.

"It was the general opinion of ministers," says Mr. Grey-Bennett, who was well acquainted with everything connected with the Queen's case, "that she would not come to England, but accept the terms proposed. The King, however, said he knew her better than they did, and come she would; and so it turned out, for the intelligence of her having reached Dover arrived at the very moment when the Duke of Wellington was riding in the Park with Lady Jersey, arguing the point with her and persisting that she could not come. Lord Hutchinson had been sent out by

the Government to treat with her, but had no written instructions. The proposition was taken by Brougham, who consented to be the official bearer of it, though he said he should not advise her to accept it. He and Lord Hutchinson left town together in the same chaise, crossed the sea in the same packet, and arrived at St. Omer together, where they found the Queen, who had come by slow journeys from Geneva. Brougham told me he had the greatest difficulty to persuade her to cross the Alps, as he wished her to be near England to carry on the negotiation, and though he had the Government proposals in his pocket since the month of April, he kept them to be presented in person, for he knew that when she received them she would set off instanter to return to England, and he was in hopes to prevent that decisive step being taken on a sudden and without reflection. The Queen, on her approach towards home, had written to Lord Liverpool to request to be informed what residence had been prepared for her, and to Lord Melville to demand a yacht to bring her over. The letter to Lord Liverpool was dated Villeneuve le Roi, the 29th of May, in which she announced her intention of coming to England on Saturday, the 3rd of June. The letter to Lord Melville was written by Lady Anne Hamilton, and bears the same date. Lord Melville answered it on the 1st of June, and stated that, as the King was not in town, he could not take his commands about sending a yacht."

CHAPTER II.

1820.

The battle was commenced in the House of Commons; Brougham from the outset intrepidly contesting every inch of ground. It was on June 6th that his Majesty sent this message to the House of Lords, commending his Queen to be dealt with by them, the first instance of the kind since the precedent of King Henry VIII.

"[George R.]

"The King thinks it necessary, in consequence of the arrival of the Queen, to communicate to the House of Lords certain papers respecting the conduct of her Majesty since her departure from this kingdom, which he recommends to the immediate and serious attention of this House.

"The King has felt the most anxious desire to avert the necessity of disclosures and discussions, which must be as painful to his people as they can be to himself; but the step now taken by the Queen leaves him no alternative.

"The King has the fullest confidence that, in consequence of this communication, the House of Lords will adopt that course of proceeding which the justice of the case and the honour and dignity of his Majesty's crown may require.

"George R."

It was then that Brougham, no doubt alarmed at the prospect of her learning the truth from others, confided to her that he had brought to Calais propositions from the King. The effect of this revelation on a woman who was about making propositions

herself may be conceived; and her distrust and suspicion of her advocate from that moment were excessive. She even thought of dismissing him.

It was felt, however, that before further measures were taken, something might be attempted in the way of compromise. It is to the credit of the Queen that the first offer came from her. This seems to have been prompted by Mr. Brougham. After Mr. Canning's speech she thought he would be found most suitable, intending to send a message to him with her odd proposal, that he should arrange an interview between her and the King. He naturally said it was not to be thought of, unless, indeed, "she threw herself upon his mercy." She answered haughtily that she would never ask mercy from him; but that, like any other peeress, she was entitled to ask an audience. She then asked Mr. Brougham what mode he would recommend of approaching his Majesty.

The minister had pointed out in the debate in the House of Commons, that no renunciation of her royal prerogative or privileges was required; she was merely to abstain from using them. This declaration was acknowledged in a cordial spirit, and she seemed inclined to agree on this basis, suggesting that some one of position should be named to prescribe the place of residence and terms generally. It was this that suggested to Mr. Wilberforce the hope of arrangement, for, as he said, the claim as to the Liturgy was only urged as a recognition, and if this could be secured by other means, the end could be gained. Accordingly, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh met the Queen's advocates. After many discussions, the important concessions were made that "official announcement of her position" was to be given to the various Courts; she was to leave in a King's ship; an address of congratulation from both Houses to her and the King to be passed; in short, a *pont d'or* as satisfactory as could be desired. But these were declined as insufficient, and the demand still pressed that her name should be restored to the Liturgy. The matter was therefore broken off.

The excellent Wilberforce incurred much odium for his share in the transactions that followed. He was eager that she should make concessions and resign the claim "to be prayed for." He accordingly proposed that the Houses should "address" her to this effect. He thus had the air of deserting the popular side.

The secret history of this transaction is that he had received a letter from her, "bad in composition, vulgar and foolish," in which she wondered how "a religious man" could propose such a thing! Brougham remonstrated with her on this foolish step, and she owned to him that she "had got into a scrape." He

then engaged to soothe Wilberforce and get him to do something. She then wrote a letter, and in clear terms threw herself upon the House, engaging to comply with their desires. And it is infinitely to his honour that, when the matter fell through, and he was pursued with obloquy for trying to make her compromise her cause, he should never have vindicated himself by producing this authorization.

Accordingly, on June 22nd, the motion was proposed and carried, with the approbation of ministers. Four delegated members waited on her, having to run the gauntlet of an incensed mob, who were expecting them in front of her residence. The Queen received them "sternly and haughtily," but declined to comply, on the ground that whether she would accept any proposed measure or not was to be decided by her own feelings and conscience.

Mr. Brougham tells that he had no part in this refusal, and that he had not even seen her reply, which was drawn up by Lushington or her solicitor. Indeed, he adds that he had assured Mr. Wilberforce "she will accede, I pledge myself." He was even anxious she should do so. The deputies were received by an enormous crowd in the most opprobrious fashion, saluted with cries of "rogues, villains, hypocrites, Cantwells." They and their carriages were spat on, and they were with difficulty saved from violence. When it was known that the Queen had refused, the shouts might have been heard at Charing Cross.*

It would almost seem that the fate of the Queen was really determined by the decision taken on this occasion. She herself was ready to adopt whatever course would be thought the most prudent. All her friends, however, including Brougham, Grey-Bennett, and others, declined to advise her, telling her that she

* MS. "Diary," Grey-Bennett. It seems probable that her adviser was accountable for this, though he affects to lay the blame upon her *camarilla*. But Mr. Wilberforce says that he had "every reason to believe she would have acquiesced, but for circumstances which I had rather state to you in person than by letter." "It was plain," says Mr. Brougham, "that they had nothing like full powers from the King. Nor, indeed, had we from the Queen; for, upon some alarm being given her by the meddling folks whom she saw, she complained that she was not informed of the whole of the negotiation." Acting under the influence of Lady Anne Hamilton, one of her ladies, she sent letters to the Speaker, or rather formal messages, beginning "Caroline R.," "which Lady Anne's brother, Lord Archibald (our stanch supporter) and myself were never aware of till an hour before they were [to be] read by the Speaker." His behaviour was inconsistent with this theory. There was, however, a disturbing element, of which account must be taken, namely, the King's determination to concede nothing that would favour a solution. The Chancellor declared that he was determined to get other ministers, if the present ones would not aid him in getting rid of his Queen.

knew her own case best, and what truth there was in the charges —a rather artful suggestion, if they thought that the agitation was to be profitable. Alderman Wood was seen in the House of Commons going about and canvassing for opinions.* Had there been one thoroughly disinterested capable adviser, he would have certainly influenced her, and the disastrous issue might have been avoided.

The excitement of "the mob," as it was fashionable to call the lower classes of her supporters, grew to be a nuisance, and became a serious trouble to those who did not share their feelings. The Chancellor, changing horses on his way to the country, was saluted with yells of "Long live the Queen!" and was in other ways marked out for annoyance. When a suitable house was being selected for the Queen—for the Government had agreed to find her one—her friends with some malice pitched on one in Hamilton Place, next door to the Chancellor's. He appealed, almost in an agony, to Lord Liverpool, and declared that if the project was persisted in he would give up, not merely his house, but his office. When they, of course, declined to purchase this mansion, the Queen's friends, still bent on harassing him, set a subscription afoot to secure it; and the Chancellor could see no other way to save himself from this persecution than to buy it himself. He disposed of it, however, again without loss. More serious ground for apprehension was in the behaviour of a battalion of the Guards—the 3rd—which at this unfortunate moment became mutinous. The Queen's friends insisted that this was owing to their sympathies with her; while the royal party attributed it to the harsh orders of the Duke of Gloucester, their colonel, who had harassed them with new severe regulations, the roll being called four times a day. This made them mutinous. They were ordered out of town next day to Portsmouth.

"But," says Mr. Grey-Bennett, "the story soon got wind, and in the evening some thousands of persons assembled opposite to the barracks in the King's Mews, Charing Cross, shouting, 'Queen for ever!' and calling to the soldiers to do the same. The people made every coachman and footman of the carriages passing by take off their hats to the barracks in honour of the soldiers; and there was evidently a very bad feeling among them. I mixed in the crowd coming up from the House of Commons, and heard many unpleasant observations. The Life Guards at last came, and the people dispersed; but I believe one or two people were wounded. The 3rd Guards on the march to Portsmouth behaved in a most disorderly manner. My neigh-

* MS. "Diary," Grey-Bennett.

bour, Sir Thomas Williams, told me that some were quartered at Collen, near his house, and that he went towards the village in the evening, and heard them shouting 'Queen for ever!' and I have been told the same took place at Kingston, where they drank the health of all the popular leaders in the alehouses where they were billeted. As usual, all this was denied by the Government and the officers; but it is true, and no doubt a strong feeling of compassion for the Queen existed in the minds of the soldiery. Even the 10th Hussars, the King's Own Regiment, showed it, and a person of credit told me he walked into the Toy Tavern, Hampton Court, where the regiment was quartered, and passing by the tap saw twelve or fourteen soldiers sitting in it, where, one of them taking up a pot of porter said, 'Come, lads, the Queen!' when they all rose and drank her health."*

No wonder that the witty Luttrell declared that "the extinguisher was taking fire."

It must be said that whatever hesitation Mr. Brougham had shown, he from this moment threw himself heart and soul into her cause, conducting it in the most intrepid as well as masterly manner, showing tact, resource, and courage and ability of the most extraordinary kind. Nor did his client owe less to the calmer virtues of his coadjutor Denman, whose character and talents were no less valuable. The episodes that followed were of the most stirring character. There was seen her advocate warning and even threatening the House of Lords, and yet with infinite adroitness keeping within due bounds.†

The Chancellor indeed contrived ingeniously to obstruct the popular cause as much as he could. For when the Queen sent to him to say she would come in person to present her petition, he answered that she must apply to the House for leave. When

* "'The Commander-in-Chief,' wrote the Duke of Wellington, 'has felt great uneasiness respecting the Coldstream Guards, and was afraid of again being surprised by a mutiny.' He also heard 'of the cry of disaffection of "The Queen" being raised on the march.' He did not know whether there was foundation for this; but Mr. Greville was assured by Lord Worcester that he heard the soldiers utter it."—"Despat. Cor. and Mem.," i. 127; Greville, i. 30.

† Brougham, however, all through made a distinction between the Queen and the woman, and he wisely never identified himself with the *camarilla*. We find him cautioning the ministers, through Mr. Arbuthnot, as to the payment of witness, counsel, etc., which he said should be done by responsible persons, who should see that the proper parties received it. He hinted that she was being "plundered by Wood and others," who he was afraid would get hold of this Government allowance. He entreated that this communication should not transpire. No wonder Mr. Arbuthnot remarked upon "the extraordinary footing he must be on with his client." —"Life of Lord Liverpool," iii. 93.

she asked him to give this message to the House, he answered that the House only received messages from the King. Then she asked him to present her petition, which he declined. "I am resolved not to be employed in any way by this lady," he wrote. "They must get another Chancellor," he added, "if he should be required to do work of that kind." But he put this yet more strongly. Those near him, when he was being harassed by Brougham's fierce attacks, heard him muttering that he "would be damned if he would act as Chancellor if such things were permitted."

One of the most interesting incidents in this exciting episode was the behaviour of Mr. Canning, which offered a pleasing instance of constancy and loyalty. It was a surprise to hear one of the prosecuting ministry standing forth in praise of the accused, though "with great ingenuity he let out all the private communications made by Brougham in the preceding summer, and pushed the argument very hard. A most remarkable passage in his speech was his protesting he would not be an accuser of the Queen, and that his respect and affection remained undiminished, and that she was the grace and ornament of every society. As may be imagined, these expressions created the greatest astonishment in the House, and I never saw Castlereagh so agitated. It is said that he complained loudly of it, declaring that he considered Canning to be a partner to all their proceedings."

In private also he expressed the same opinions: "Brougham has had his game, too. . . . He dreaded compromise. He thought he saw how it might be effected. He barred that course by offering mediation. He thus got the thing into his own hands, and, having got it there, he let it languish till success was hopeless."*

Though he spoke on the ministerial side he gave her the highest and warmest praise: "There was no society in Europe," he said, "of which she would not be the grace, life, and ornament. The honourable gentleman," said Mr. Canning, "called upon the Government to come forward frankly, and at once, as her Majesty's accusers. I for one," continued he, "will never, so help me God, place myself in the situation of her accuser." He concluded with declaring that he should take no further share in the deliberations on the subject. This announcement he proceeded to put into practice forthwith.†

* Grey-Bennett, "Diary."

† "Let anyone put this question to himself," he wrote from abroad, "Do you think we could get the Duke of York off, as we did in 1809, after such a bill as this will be, when it ceases to be a bill of divorce, had been

It was not surprising that this chivalrous man should feel his position untenable, and when Mr. Wilberforce's compromise was rejected he waited on the King and placed himself at his disposal. The following is the account of the interview sent to a friend, the real names being originally disguised as "Marcus," "Mars," "The Magdalen," etc. He explained that while he approved of all the steps up to the present, he could not join in any further proceedings owing to the old intimacy and the confidence she had placed in him. He submitted whether it was then desirable that he should remain in the ministry; though he did not offer his resignation.

"The King expressed his strong sense of the manly proceeding of Mr. Canning on this occasion, and his especial satisfaction at his having come at once to him with this communication, instead of conveying it through a third person. He acquiesced with perfect cordiality and good humour in the adoption by him of the line of proceeding which he had announced with respect to the Queen's affairs, said it was what he had expected, but plainly intimated at the same time his impression that Mr. Canning had not told all his reasons for declining to take a share in the hostile proceedings against the Queen. With respect to the question of retirement, as it affected the general interest of the King's service,

enacted?" I would defy you to do so; and, after all, without the clause of divorce, of what value is the bill, supposing it passed into a law, to the King? Would he have given sixpence for it originally in that state? Not he. But having tasted the sweets of discussion, he may be now willing to compromise for getting anything through, so as not to appear to come out of court, as, in fact he does, completely defeated. But this is precisely the mortification from which we, his servants, ought to have saved him. We ought to have said from the beginning: "Sir, divorce is impossible." "What, if she comes, if she braves, if she insults?" etc. "Yes, Sir, in any case, divorce is impossible. Other things may be tried, other expedients may be resorted to; but divorce, we tell you again, is impossible. It can never be." These were sagacious warnings.

"Had we stuck to this, and this, I say was our opinion, in February (mine always, now more than it was then—not more then than it is now), depend upon it he would have discarded Leach, and played us fair. But, there were conferences as well as minutes, and I suspect the unwritten counteracted the written communications. And see the fruits!—a Government brought into contempt and detestation; a kingdom thrown into such ferment and convulsion, as no other kingdom or Government ever recovered from without a revolution; but I hope we shall.

"I would have pledged my life to settle the whole matter last summer, or at any time before the fatal measure of the Liturgy. I would have undertaken it even after, though with diminished confidence of success. But the Government was not prepared to pursue their own course by any means but those which were indicated to them; and these indications came from a quarter which wished for extremities, as the way of getting at what they are now enjoying!"

the latter declared that it was full of difficulty, and that he should wish to have a few hours for the consideration of it before he returned a final answer to Mr. Canning's communication. After a conversation of more than an hour in the most friendly tone, they shook hands at parting, and the King again assured him of his entire approval of his conduct; that whatever might be the King's decision upon this matter, whether to adopt his advice with respect to his retirement or not, he should never cease to feel the sincerest regard for Mr. Canning. He said further, that if ever he should hear (as he probably might) reflections thrown out against him for stopping short after having gone so far in the proceedings against the Queen, he should uniformly declare that Mr. Canning had acted in the most manly, and honourable, and gentlemanlike manner.

"The next day he was informed that he must remain and follow what course he pleased as to the Queen; and further, might assign the King's pleasure as the reason for his remaining. This showed what favour he enjoyed. In a fortnight he was addressing the most earnest remonstrances to Lord Liverpool, over whom he exercised extraordinary influence against the divorce. His arguments seem unanswerable, the main one being that the consequence of such a clause would alarm everyone, and shipwreck the bill. All through the proceedings he gave warning in this sense, appealing with justice to their own Cabinet addresses to the King, in which this very step was depreciated with forcible arguments. But his strongest point was his appeal to the Duke of York's case. For if the divorce were dropped, he argued, it became a question of private morality unworthy the investigation of the House; the very argument so vehemently pressed against the Opposition when it was the interest of the Court that the Duke's "green bag" should not be opened. Again and again he prophesied, "The bill will not pass," and he advised withdrawing it frankly in the Upper House—a course which Lord Liverpool later was to adopt. He felt, however, the awkwardness of his situation, and withdrew from the scene, remaining abroad till the matter terminated."

On the amiable Denman, who seems to have viewed the whole through an atmosphere of romance, the Queen and her trials had left an impression of deep pity and sympathy.

He was looking on when she entered London on that eventful day. Her equipage, he says, was mean and miserable. On the box of one carriage was a man with a turban, in the others Italians, "with enormous moustachios"—a rather unusual spectacle, and always considered "outlandish." There was scarcely a

well-dressed person in the crowd, while among the few on horseback he recognised a sheriff's broker, and his own "bankrupt cousin." A touch of character that a dramatist would relish was to be noted in the remarks made by husband and wife of each other on this occasion. The King said indignantly, "That beast Wood sat by the Queen's side!" This being reported to the Queen, she said, "That was very kind of him!" "She pertinaciously," says Denman, "cherished the hope of a reconciliation, and related with pride a compliment twenty years old, paid her by the Prince, when speaking handsomely of a bride, he had declared, 'she was just like the Princess of Wales.' She might well treasure up these meagre testimonials: they had been few. She looked at me," he goes on, "with uncommon earnestness, and said, 'I know the man. Well, mark what I say, we shall be good friends before we die.' Her bearing," he says, "as she appeared on the balcony was most noble and attractive, firm and graceful, with a fixed courage in her eye. She kept repeating again and again, 'If he wished me to stay abroad, why not leave me in peace? So here I am.'"

Almost to the last, however, the Queen had a rooted distrust of her advocate, Brougham, and suspected he had acted a double part. She made the significant declaration, "Had he come over to me at Geneva, I had been spared all this." And on the very eve of the trial she thought seriously of dismissing him. It does, indeed, seem that while Denman was the advocate of her cause, Brougham merely considered himself as "holding a brief," as it were, "instructed by an attorney." Even when he left her on her arrival, she said, "He is afraid."

In the interval between the debates in the Houses and the trial, the Queen removed to Brandenburgh House, not long before the residence of a rather eccentric lady, the Margravine of Anspach —Lady Craven—whose matrimonial relations had also been of a disturbed character. This was a large villa at Hammersmith, on the edge of the Thames, and hither she removed in the first week of August. The owner could scarcely have congratulated himself on his new tenant, for from that hour the house was almost daily invaded by large mobs in charge of addresses, who spread themselves over the flowers, coming up to the windows, and freely entering the drawing-rooms and other portions of the premises. These testimonials of attachment were sent from all parts of the kingdom, and the list is certainly an extraordinary one; but there was a sad loss of dignity incurred from the familiarity of the proceedings, and the proletarian character of this sort of popularity. The poor lady, however, never flagged

in the resolute energy of her part, receiving all comers with unfailing enthusiasm, and welcoming all "the greasy rogues" that arrived "in their thousands."

Quiet retirement with an air of suffering would have been far more politic. As it was, all this afforded an opening which those opposed to her were not slow to turn to account, and a newspaper which had been recently established—the *John Bull*,* whose chief *raison d'être* was to expose her failings—was now rendering, under the clever direction of Theodore Hook, most valuable aid to Government.

The incidents of this extraordinary trial were, as it may be conceived, full of a dramatic interest; and conspicuous above all were the singular courage and resolution displayed by the chief personage concerned. Next to her, all interest was drawn by the matchless exertions of Brougham, whose conduct of the case and masterly exposure of the witnesses were beyond all praise.†

* So successful was this journal that the editor was receiving £2000 a year. Its personality may be gathered from this specimen—"The Visit of Mrs. Muggins to Brandenburgh House."

Have you been to Brandenburgh, heigh, ma'am, ho, ma'am?
Have you been to Brandenburgh, ho?—
O yes, I have been, ma'am, to visit the Queen, ma'am,
With the rest of the gallantee show, show—
With the rest of the gallantee show.

And who were the company, heigh, ma'am, ho, ma'am?
Who were the company, ho?—
We happened to drop in with gemmen from Wapping,
And ladies from Blowbladder Row, row—
Ladies from Blowbladder Row.

What saw you at Brandenburgh, heigh, ma'am, ho, ma'am?
What saw you at Brandenburgh, ho?—
We saw a great dame, with a face red as flame,
And a character spotless as snow, snow—
A character spotless as snow.

And who were attending her, heigh, ma'am, ho, ma'am?
Who were attending her, ho?—
Lord Hood for a man—for a maid Lady Anne,
And Alderman Wood for a beau, beau—
Alderman Wood for a beau, etc.

Lord Byron wrote an epigram. The fire never slackened an instant; wit, or coarse *persiflage*, was poured upon her: as when the braziers of London presented their address, declaring that they would "find more brass than they carried." And it was stated that these bitter and unscrupulous attacks had the effect intended, viz. of frightening away any of the higher and more respectable classes who were inclined to support the Queen.

† That unclean band he, with delightful irony, described to the House. He apologised for "seeking" to elude a bill "supported by so respectable a

The interval between this proceeding and the trial was filled up with processions, shoutings, etc., which her Majesty heartily encouraged. On the other side, the witnesses—the Italian herd—were sent for, and arrived. Public curiosity was much exercised by the preparations for their reception. There was something revolting in seeing the large space next Westminster Bridge being built in and barricaded, so that there could be no approach save from the river. The houses of the officers of the House of Lords were devoted to their accommodation, while the place was regularly victualled, furniture being secretly introduced; walls were run up to prevent them being seen as they took exercise; and gunboats on the river and a military force on the land side strictly guarded them:* while the royal cooks were installed. By the 12th several boatloads of witnesses were landed at the stairs, and the whole band was finally mustered by the 14th of August. "About this building, in which they were immured from August until November," says Lord Albemarle in his agreeable recollections, "the London mob would hover like a cat round the cage of a canary." The Italians, however, were not distressed at their confinement; enjoying the good fare provided for them, and amusing themselves with their national dances.

When the day of the trial drew near, the Queen came to town, having at last selected a house by Lady Francis's in St. James's Square, adjoining Lord Castlereagh's, who was too intrepid a man to be affected, as was the Lord Chancellor, by such a neighbour.†

body of witnesses as those assembled in Cotton Garden. Judging from their exterior," said he, "they must be like those persons with whom your lordships are in the habit of associating. They must doubtless be seized in fee-simple of those decent habiliments—persons who would regale themselves at their own expense, live in separate apartments, have full powers of locomotion, and require no other escort than their attendant *lacquais de place*."

* Lord Albemarle, "Fifty Years of my Life," ii. 123.

† The bill was as follows:

"An Act, entitled 'An Act for depriving Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, Queen of Great Britain, of and from the style and title of Queen of these realms, and of and from the rights, prerogatives, and immunities now belonging to her as Queen Consort.'

"Whereas in the year 1814, her Majesty Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, then Princess of Wales, but now Queen of England, being at the Court of Milan, engaged in her service one Bartholomo Pergami, otherwise Bartholomo Bergami, a foreigner of low situation in life, and afterwards the most unbecoming and indecent familiarities took place between her Royal Highness and the said Bartholomo; and her Royal Highness not only advanced him to a high situation in her household, but received also many of his relatives into her service in inferior and other situations, and

On the morning of August 17th, the day when the trial really began, and the Queen was to attend, the whole of London was in a ferment, and Westminster a network of barricades. Enormous bodies of soldiers and police were at every corner, while the whole space between St. James's Square and the Houses of Parliament was crammed with people from six o'clock in the morning.

The peers began to arrive betimes, while the Chancellor came at the singularly early hour of eight. Every window and housetop was covered with spectators. The Duke of York arrived on horseback, the Duke of Wellington being hissed and groaned at.* The Duke of Sussex was received rapturously. The roar of voices all along the route gave notice of the procession, for such it was, which was to be the daily programme for some time to come, which swelled into shouts as the carriage, drawn by six horses, with servants in the royal liveries of scarlet and gold with purple velvet caps and facings, came into view. Behind

bestowed on him, the said Bartholomo, various marks of distinction and favour, and took upon herself to confer upon him the Order of Knighthood, and pretended to institute an Order of Knighthood, without the authority of your Majesty, and conducted herself both in public and in private in various places, with indecent and offensive familiarities and freedom towards the said Bartholomo, and carried on with him a disgraceful, licentious, and adulterous intercourse, to the great scandal of your Majesty's royal family, and to the dishonour of the kingdom, and manifested a most scandalous, disgraceful, and vicious conduct towards the said Bartholomo. We, therefore, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, humbly pray your Majesty that it may be enacted, and be it therefore enacted, that from and after the passing of this Act, the said Caroline Amelia Elizabeth be wholly deprived of and from the style and title of Queen of these realms, and of, and from the rights, prerogatives, privileges, and immunities now belonging to her as Queen Consort, and that she shall and may be, from and after the passing of this Act, for ever displaced from, and be utterly incapable of, exercising or enjoying the same, and that the said marriage between his Majesty the King and the Queen be, and the same is hereby wholly dissolved and annulled, to all intents and purposes."

* The Duke, however, was getting pretty well accustomed to the attentions of the mob, and thoroughly despised the manifestation either of applause or dislike. He would ride to and from the House, where he took a prominent part against the Queen. As the people would press on his horse, shouting out to his face, "No foul play, my lord! The Queen for ever!" he would answer in his own characteristic style, "Yes, yes, yes." One of the stories ran, that he added good-humouredly, "And may all your wives be like her." Long after the fickle crowd had forgotten the services of Waterloo, and broken his windows, he was attended home by a mob, shouting in uproarious applause, and cheering him all the way. But as he entered he pointed significantly to his windows, then decorated with the iron shutters, never opened till the day of his death. A finely contemptuous rebuke.

followed other carriages, containing Sir William Gell and Mr. Keppel Craven, who, though they might have left her service in some disgust at her conduct, were chivalrous enough to return to it, to show their belief in her innocence of more serious charges. This to an impartial mind would not be without weight. Along the route the soldiers on duty were posted, and the multitude watched those stationed at Carlton House with feverish anxiety, to see whether they would present arms. They did so, to the delight and even rapture of the mob, who shook hands with them, while some of the women embraced them. The cries were all of the same affectionate character. "God bless your Majesty!" "We'll give our blood for you!" "The Queen or death!" "May you overcome your enemies!" Men were seen carrying green bags at the end of long poles. At Westminster Lord Albemarle, who was present, graphically describes the scene, and the appearance of the chief actress.

"Denman was addressing the House on the morning of the 18th, when a confused sound of drums, trumpets, and human voices announced the approach of the Queen. Beams a foot square had been thrown across the street between St. Margaret's Church and the Court of King's Bench; but this barrier her Majesty's admirers dashed through with as much ease as if they had been formed of reeds, and accompanied her Majesty to the entrance of the House. The peers rose as the Queen entered, and remained standing until she took her seat in a crimson and gilt chair, immediately in front of her counsel. Her appearance was anything but prepossessing. She wore a black dress with a high ruff, an unbecoming gipsy hat with a huge bow in front, the whole surmounted with a plume of ostrich feathers. Nature had given her light hair, blue eyes, a fair complexion, and a good-humoured expression of countenance; but these characteristics were marred by painted eyebrows, and by a black wig with a profusion of curls, which overshadowed her cheeks, and gave a bold, defiant air to her features.*

Almost the most dramatic incident was the appearance of the notorious "Majocchi," of *Non mi ricordo* memory. When he came forward this strange incident occurred. "The Queen," says one who witnessed the scene, "stood up close to him and threw her

* The trial began on August 17th, and by September 7th the Attorney-General, the examination and cross-examination of the witnesses for the Crown being concluded, proceeded to comment on the evidence. The House adjourned to October 3rd, to give time for the defence being prepared. On the 5th Mr. Brougham's speech was concluded. On November 2nd, the debate on the second reading began, which lasted until the 6th, when there was a majority for the bill of twenty-eight; and on the third reading it was passed by a majority of nine, when it was withdrawn.

veil completely back, held her body very backward, and placed both her arms in her sides. In this position she stared furiously at him. For some seconds there was a dead silence, and she screamed out 'Theodore!' in the most frantic manner, and rushed violently out of the House. I think she is insane, for her manner to-day chilled my blood."* This seems to point to what was so often said by her family and others, that there was some madness below all her eccentricities. On the evidence of this Majocchi and that of Dumont, both discharged servants—the latter her *femme de chambre*—rested the chief charges, which, as is well known, related to her behaviour to Bergami, a man whom, from being her courier, she had made her chamberlain. Her proceedings in this connection raised extraordinary presumptions of guilt; yet it could be argued that the instance most insisted on, that of having her courier's and her own bed placed in a tent on the deck of a vessel showed from the publicity of the proceedings an insane recklessness as to public opinion.

On the part of the prosecution, it was insinuated that all her English suite had left her within a few months. This included Mr. St. Leger, Sir W. Gell, Mr. Craven, and Lady Charlotte Lindsay. Satisfactory reasons were given by all these persons for their retirement. On the other hand, there was a long roll of Italian testimony coming from persons of the highest rank in her favour—secured, indeed, too late for the trial.†

The re-entry into her service, when the trial came on, of Sir W. Gell and Mr. Keppel Craven, also of Lord and Lady Llandaff, was certainly evidence in her favour. But then it was urged, against their testimony in the witness-box, that they had been with her but a few months, and previous to her extravagance. There can be no doubt that Bergami was of a good family. His father was a physician, in possession of a good property, lands, and houses, which had got involved and had to be sold,

* Some declared that she said "Traditore!" And the graphic sketch of the present Lord Albemarle's father, written on the day of the occurrence, was no doubt the true version. "Some consider it proof of conscious guilt, forgetting that the Queen knew well that he was to be examined; others, an indignant protest at seeing her servant dressed up and turned into a gentleman on the next day." "I never," says her admiring counsel, Denman, "saw a human being so interesting. Her face was pale, her eyelids a little sunken, her eyes fixed on the ground, with no expression of alarm or consciousness, but with an appearance of decent distress at being made the subject of such revolting calumnies." This demeanour, however, would naturally have been the result of a reaction after the outburst of the preceding day.

† The most complete view of the investigation will be found in Wilks's "Memoirs," where a fair analysis of the charges with reference to the evidence by which it is supported, and the reply, are set out.

on which his son enlisted in an hussar regiment. It is remarkable, too, that his whole family—mother, brothers, sisters, cousins, to the number of eight or nine—were established in this strange woman's service.

But what taints the whole proceeding was the mode—almost unavoidable under the circumstances—in which the evidence was secured. When it was known that all who could tell anything or find out anything would be taken to England, paid for their time and services; that the Hanoverian minister, Baron Ompteda, had eagerly taken on himself the duty of "ferreting out" evidence; that there was an Italian lawyer, Vimercati, employed to visit all "likely" persons, employing Italians to bring forward the diffident or reluctant; when it was known, in short, that the "King of England" desired aid, who could doubt that a premium was set on falsehood and exaggeration?

But still the course of her admitted proceedings—her extraordinary ill-regulated defiance of public opinion, her reckless patronage of those she liked, her taste for associating with the lowest, and her instinctive repulsion to those who were respectable and decorous—all this, carried on in a distant land, warranted the evil opinion held of her, and made her accountable for it. The public, not having time or inclination to appraise nice distinctions, for its own convenience holds a particular sort of conduct to be significant of evil, throwing the onus of disproof on those who exhibit such behaviour. Much of this was owing to the consciousness that she was surrounded by spies, proved by the fact that at Baden an official of the Court was engaged in taking notes of her proceedings, which at the trial, by direction of the Grand Duke, he declined to produce. This seemed mysterious, and the conclusion was that their record would have damaged the prosecutor's case. But Miss Wynne, the agreeable diarist, was told by Lord Redesdale that at Baden, when a *partie de chasse* had been made for her, she appeared "with a half pumpkin on her head," to the amazement of the Grand Duke. She explained that it was the coolest sort of *coiffure!* If the spy-diarist had this fact upon his notes, it is needless to say that it would have shown she was scarcely accountable for her actions.

The intrepid Brougham, as we have said, confronted this hired miscellany, though with an interpreter interposed. One of his *coups* was masterly. He learned by the merest accident that Rastelli, one of the King's witnesses, had been allowed to go away, and instantly turned it to profit, by desiring to have him recalled to clear up some point. It will be seen what could be made of this. For the tribunal he was addressing he made no

secret of his contempt, crushing interruptions with a fierce sardonic tone, that made the offender appeal for protection to the House. The very interpreter he would address with studious politeness as "Marquis"—he had been a teacher—affecting to put him on a level with the noble persons round him. It was thought a great hardship that he had been compelled to declare whether he would call witnesses before being allowed to open his case—as he desired to conduct his case in his own way, to make his speech so to neutralise the admirable one made by the comparatively obscure Williams, who had admirably summed up the evidence for the prosecution. The Attorney-General was considered to have made but a weak display. The Chancellor, however, had insisted on his announcing the course he had decided on. By the adjournment for three weeks, the startling evidence had time to circulate, without antidote and uncontradicted. Mr. Greville's comments express happily enough the view of an ordinary observer of the day.

"There is no one more violent than Lord Lauderdale,* and neither the Attorney-General nor the Solicitor-General can act with greater zeal than he does in support of the bill. Lord Liverpool is a model of fairness, impartiality, and candour. The Chancellor is equally impartial, and as he decides personally all disputes on legal points which are referred to the House, his fairness has been conspicuous in having generally decided in favour of the Queen's counsel."

The struggle being vital, no one was to be spared, and the strokes at the King were of the most unsparing personality. In his splendid speech—the peroration of which he had written again and again—Mr. S. Percival suggested to him the happy *à propos*, asking who was the secret instigator—the airy, unsubstantial being who was behind—he wished to encounter—

> This shape—
> If shape it could be called—that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb. What seemed its head
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

* In the course of the trial, in order to show that the Queen had associated in Italy with ladies of good character, it was stated that a Countess T—— frequented her society at Florence. On cross-examination it came out that the Countess spoke a provincial dialect, anything but the purest Tuscan, whence it was implied that she was a vulgar person, and Lord Lauderdale especially pointed out this inference, speaking himself in very broad Scotch. Upon which Lord ——, a member of the Opposition, said to the witness, "Have the goodness to state whether Countess T—— spoke Italian with as broad an accent as the noble Earl who has just sat down speaks with in his native tongue." The late Sir Henry Holland was present when this occurred, and used to relate the anecdote.

This Pythian dart—piercing where the King was most sensitive—was never forgiven, though his Majesty long after said that Brougham had only done his duty. But Denman carried this license of quotation beyond decent limits. Dr. Parr, who had ardently taken up the Queen's case, had bidden Denman look into Bayle's Dictionary for suitable classical allusions, under such headings as Julia, Judith—and the name of Octavia, the wife of Nero, at once flashed upon the counsel, and, as he tells us, he determined to make her his heroine, of course elaborating the parallel. In the classical story is given a retort by the "honest chambermaid" not fit for ears polite, which he determined to use, meaning to apply it to Majocchi. No one can doubt Denman's truth; but the public most naturally applied the gross insinuation to the King, who was, further, dubbed Nero in the newspapers—his palace "Nerot's Hotel." This, as will be seen, was also never forgiven, or, rather, cherished with undying rancour. The Duke of Clarence, to whom he made the well-known apostrophe, "Come forth, thou slanderer," was magnanimous enough to dismiss it from his recollection.*

The ingenious device by which the Queen's friends actually supported the divorce clause, knowing that it was odious to the orthodox, in spite of the effort of the Government to withdraw it, was successful. It is amusing to find that though "the bishops'" consciences were exercised, they obeyed the instincts of party rather than of conscience, and supported the bill, divorce and all. By these tactics the majority on the third reading sank to nine, on which the Prime Minister announced that he would withdraw the measure. At this moment of triumph a supporter of the Queen's met her "coming out alone from her waiting-room, preceded by an usher. She had been there unknown to me. I stopped involuntarily; I could not indeed proceed, for she had a dazed look, more tragical than consternation. She passed me; the usher pushed open the folding doors of the great staircase, she began to descend, and I followed instinctively, two or three steps behind her. She was evidently all shuddering, and she took hold of the banister, pausing for a moment. Oh! that sudden clutch with which she caught the railing! It was as if her hand had been a skinless heart. Four or five persons came in from

* Not less unfortunate was he in other allusions—as in his finale, when he talked of repentance, and bade her "go and sin no more," an awkward point, which gave rise to the pleasant epigram—

Gracious lady, we implore
That you will go and sin no more;
Or, if the effort be too great,
Go away at any rate.

The likening her to "unsunned snow" caused merriment.

below before she reached the bottom of the stairs. I think Alderman Wood was one of them; but I was in indescribable confusion. The great globe itself was shaking under me. I rushed past, and out into the hastily assembling crowd. The pressure was as in the valley of Jehoshaphat that shall be. I knew not where I was, but in a moment a shouting in the balcony above, on which a number of gentlemen from the interior of the House were gathering, roused me. The multitude then began to cheer, but at first there was a kind of stupor: but the sympathy, however, soon became general, and, winged by the voice, soon spread up the street; everyone instantly, between Charing Cross and Whitehall, turned and came rushing down, filling Old and New Palace Yards, as if a deluge were unsluiced. The generous exultation of the people was beyond all description."

Brougham and Denman drew her into a room to sign a petition to the House to be heard by counsel. Then it was that the woman, victorious and triumphant, as she wrote her name, "Caroline," added "*Regina*," in spite of them!

CHAPTER III.

1821.

One of the immediate steps following on the conclusion of the trial, was the retirement of Mr. Canning. The reasons given showed his chivalry and delicacy. These he set out in a letter to the King.

"When, in the month of June, I presumed humbly to represent to your Majesty the impossibility of my taking any part in the proceedings against the Queen, and in consequence laid at your Majesty's feet the tender of my resignation, your Majesty had the goodness and condescension to command me to continue in your service, abstaining from any share in those proceedings. And your Majesty was farther pleased to grant me full authority to plead your Majesty's express commands for so continuing in office.

"That authority I have not abused. And I have persevered in obedience to your Majesty's commands (the generosity of which I can never sufficiently acknowledge) until a state of things has arisen to which they cannot be considered as applying.

"The proceeding in the House of Commons, which was then in contemplation when your Majesty's commands were laid upon me, was one which would have been conducted (as that in the House of Lords) apart from all other matters. The absenting myself from that separate proceeding would have required no other explanation than that which your Majesty had so indulgently authorised me to furnish; nor need such partial absence from the House of Commons have created any embarrassment in the general conduct of parliamentary business.

"But the discussions respecting the Queen, which may now be expected in the House of Commons, will be so much intermixed with the general business of the session, that a minister could not absent himself from them without appearing virtually to abandon the parliamentary duties of his station. On the other hand, to be present, as a minister, taking no part in the discussions, must produce not only the most painful embarrassment to himself, but the greatest perplexity to his colleagues, and the utmost disadvantage to the conduct of your Majesty's affairs."

THE KING TO MR. CANNING.

"Carlton House, Dec. 13th, 1820.

"The King receives with regret, but not with surprise, Mr. Canning's letter, tendering his resignation.

"The King feels, as he should do, the loss of a servant, whose great talents rendered him so very useful to the Government and the country."

In January, 1821, the ministry determined to make an allowance to the Queen. When the King read his speech, and mentioned the provision to be made for the Queen, he laid great emphasis on the word "you," as if he would be no party to it. He looked, too, very black, and was in no way in a good humour. In going down to and returning from the House of Peers, he was civilly treated. Many cries of "Queen, Queen" were heard; some few people applauded; but the general feeling was one of contempt and indifference: the greater part of the spectators not taking off their hats.*

On the 1st of February, after the presentation of petitions in reference to the Queen had taken from four to five hours, a message from the Queen was read to the effect that she declined any provision so long as her name was excluded from the Liturgy. This she was persuaded into sending by Mr. Brougham, though she was disinclined to take his advice, saying, "she ought not to refuse the only act of kindness and consideration which the King had shown his subjects since his accession." The debates† that

* Grey-Bennett's "Diary," from which the passages in inverted commas that follow, are taken.

† An amusing story is recorded by the same diarist. In one of these debates "Mr. Horace Twiss replied—a lawyer-like artificial speech, got up with care, but singularly absurd; good language in general, but foolish throughout. Macintosh told me that Dr. Holland informed him that as he was going down Searle Street, where Twiss lives, he saw a crowd of persons standing under the window of his lodgings, and joining them, he

followed were of the most exciting kind. We hear of Brougham being called to order for alluding to the House as persons who "presumed to think themselves administrators," declaring his perfect faith in her innocence, and invoking maledictions on himself if he were not speaking the truth—"tearing opponents limb from limb." It was determined to appeal for a subscription to be set on foot by her party in lieu of an allowance. But the great Whig lords either objected to the proposal or took it up very coldly, and it flagged from the outset. After various ineffectual attempts to kindle enthusiasm, the changeable woman began to think that she would accept the provision from the public purse.

"I dined," said Mr. Grey-Bennett, "on Saturday the 17th inst., with the Queen at Brandenburgh House. The party consisted of the Duke of Bedford, Lord Grey, Lord Nugent, my brother Ossulston-Lambton and Lady Louisa Brougham, Mr. Lushington, Alderman Wood, Sir R. Fergusson, Mr. Denman, Lord A. Hamilton, Madame Oldi, Madame Fabrici, Major Antaldi, and two or three other Italian gentlemen. The dinner was good and agreeable, the Queen very civil and free, and evidently more at her ease and more tranquil within than she was when I dined there before Christmas. She, as usual, by her natural gait of a bad manner, with a short, fat, clumpy, ill-dressed figure, and by endeavouring to look tall and young, contrived by several strange and curious movements to be the very reverse of a queen; but no one who studied the manner, such as it was, but must have been convinced how easily an unpardonable interpretation might be given, and yet how unjust and ill-founded such construction might be."

The King carried out his *rôle* of indifference not unskilfully at levees. "Many petitions were presented to him about the Queen; he was very civil to some persons and rude to others. Lord Grey he received in a very marked and good-humoured manner. He said to the Duke of Bedford: 'How do you do, my lord? I hope the Duchess is well.' At the last levee he had only said, as the Duke passed by: 'How does your grace do?' The Duke of Leinster presented several petitions about the Queen. The King took the first, and, with a sneer, said, 'Et cætera, et cætera, et cætera, et cætera.' Lord Darlington, not being able to wait for the levee (Lady Darlington being ill in the north), wrote to Bloomfield to present the city of Durham petition at Brighton. Bloomfield replied that the King made it a rule to do no business at Brighton, and that for many years the King and Lord Darlington had not

found they were listening to someone haranguing to himself in the room above. While he stood there he heard: 'Mr. Speaker,—The Bill of Pains and Penalties——' In this way Mr. Twiss prepared his speech."

been upon such terms as to warrant his asking to be received privately. Lord Darlington upon this waited upon Lord Sidmouth, who read the correspondence, and, saying nothing, only begged Lord Darlington not to leave town, but to wait upon him on the next day. Some short time before the hour fixed Lord Darlington received a note postponing the visit to the following morning. When he came to the Home Office Lord Sidmouth said: 'Your lordship must have observed my astonishment at the letter you did me the honour to show me a few days back. Accordingly, the moment I got home, I sent a special messenger down to Brighton with a letter to the King, praying him to reconsider his resolution. I have this day received an answer, and his Majesty will receive your lordship to-morrow morning.' This is amusing, and of a piece with a speech of Lord Sidmouth's to the Archbishop of York during the Queen's trial. 'My lord,' he said, 'the King will ruin us all; he hangs like a dead weight about us.' Lord Darlington went down to Brighton, had his audience, and presented his petitions. On receiving them the King said: 'My lord, you have done your duty, and I have done mine,' and bowed him out of the room."

"The Queen wrote a letter," goes on Mr. Grey-Bennett, "a few days back to Lord Liverpool, accepting the £50,000 a year, and returning thanks to the King for it. This letter she wrote of her own accord, consulting no one, not even Alderman Wood, who, aware of her intention, and wishing to throw an impediment in the way, took off in his pocket Lord Liverpool's letter to her, announcing the parliamentary grant, and the King's consent to the bill. He told me he had advised her to consult Denman as to the terms of the letter (Brougham being out of town on the circuit), but she did no such thing. The ministers are very triumphant at this act, and the letter is very unworthy of her, the expressions being by far too humble, and the tone not at all that of defiance, which it was the duty she owed to herself at all times to take. They and their friends now say, 'She will go abroad immediately, and that she has given up Brougham, etc. etc. etc. She has, to my mind, done another foolish thing, and when she acts of herself she seldom does a wise one."

She then made another foolish demand to be admitted to the Drawing Room, and being refused, declared that she would go, but was dissuaded by her friends. Yet there was something almost pathetic in the position of the unfortunate, who, it was plain, was not indisposed to peace and reconciliation, but was urged forward by the faction.

"I went in the morning," says the diarist, "to take up an address from the people of Manchester to the Queen, signed by

9000 persons. We found there Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord Milton, and Mr. William Russell, Sir William Rowley, Sir G. Anson, Mr. Pym, Mr. Whitbread, and many others of the House of Commons, all with addresses. Lady Anne Hamilton said to me: 'This, indeed, is a Queen's levee.' Brougham came home with Lambton and myself, and showed us the communication of the Queen refusing the money; he said that with great difficulty he had persuaded her to sign it, and showed us a letter from her to him on the preceding Sunday, in which she said, 'that she thought she ought not to refuse the only act of kindness and consideration which the King had shown his subjects since his accession to the throne.' Brougham, however, persevered and convinced her she had nothing left but to sign the paper, and that the country would stand by her."

Returning now to his majesty, we find him engrossed in preparations for a scheme that kindled his utmost enthusiasm. He had resolved to be crowned. The circumstances were more embarrassing now than they would have been the preceding year; but he was eager to attempt it.

CHAPTER IV.

1821.

The magnificent ceremonial of the coronation of George IV. is described by those who witnessed it as one of the most dazzling pageants that could be conceived. It was the last, and probably will be the last, that was carried out on such a scale and with due attention to the old and chivalric theatrical elements of the ceremony. With such a monarch it was a show that was indeed after his own heart and his special tastes. In the preceding year a day had been fixed, and the "Court of Claims" had begun to sit, when tidings arrived of the Queen being on her way home. This disagreeable news threw all into confusion, and it was determined to put the ceremonial off. The following year it was determined to proceed afresh, even though the Queen was likely to give some trouble. The most costly preparations were set on foot. The "Court of Claims," for adjudging on the persons who were entitled to be present, again sat. Fancy dresses and jewels were ordered. Westminster Abbey and Westminster Hall rang to the sounds of workmen.

The singular correspondence that follows, relative to the unhappy lady's claim to share in the proceedings, will be found interesting if not amusing.

THE QUEEN TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Brandenbourgh House, 3the of March, 1821.

"The Queen having been informed through the midium of Lord Liverpool, namely, that Parlement had voted a Provision

for the Queen, and that the sum agreed to by the two Houses of Parlement would be ready for the immediate use of the Queen, she find herself under the necessity of accepting it, with a sense of gratitude towards the King, having been proposed by his majesty himself at the opening of Parlement; and the Queen is only anxious to show to the King that She wishesse to Received from Him, and not from a mere Party Spirit. The Queen at the same time thinks herself authorised to look upon this messure as the first act of Justice of his majesty toward's the Queen. She also add that she most entertains the flattering expectation that the same sentimens of Justice which has prevailed in her favour will also effect upon the Heart of the King, by plaicing her name in the Liturgi as Queen, as such having been the Rights and custum of Her Predecessors. The Queen can never forget what difficulties, and a great deal of troubles She has undergone on that account upon the Continant by having her Name been omitted in the Liturgi, and in consequence She deed not Received the Honour which where due to the Queen, as the Consort to the King of England.

"Justice is the basis of happiness for King's, and the good judgment of His Majesty will point it out to him the Methods by which he will accelerate the wish of his People, and the satisfaction of the Queen on this subject, and the Queen has not the least doubt but that the King will, taking into his consideration the Queen's situation, and to act accordinly with that generosity which Characterises a great Mind. Under such circumstances the Queen submit herself intierly to his majesty's dicesion.

"CAROLINE R."

MINUTE OF CABINET.

"March 19th, 1821.

"It is not probable that, after receiving the proposed answer, the Queen should make any attempt to come to Court on Thursday.

"It appears to be proper, however, to be prepared for such an event, in case it should occur. The King's confidential servants are unanimously and decidedly of opinion that in such case no attempt should be made to obstruct the Queen on her way to Buckingham House. Such obstruction could not be made without the risk of creating general confusion in the metropolis, and of shedding quantities of blood.

"It is proposed therefore that if the Queen should arrive at Buckingham House she should be immediately shown into a room on the ground-floor, and that the Lord Chamberlain, Vice-

Chamberlain, or some other officer of his majesty's household, should be sent to her to receive her petition.

"If she should decline delivering it into any hands but the King's, the King should not be advised to permit her to come up to the drawing-room, but should himself go down to the room where the Queen is, attended by such of his household and his ministers as may be there, and receive the petition.

"It is conceived that there can be no difficulty, by previous arrangements such as those which have been recently adopted, to prevent the Queen from coming up the stairs, without incurring any of the inconveniences which must arise from a conflict in the streets or in the park."

THE PETITION OF CAROLINE, QUEEN CONSORT, TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

"Brandenbourg House, March 21st, 1821.

"Her Majesty seeks to lay before the King this representation of the grievance to which she has been subjected by the continued omission of her name in the Liturgy. The privilege of being prayed for by name in the Church service has been enjoyed by her predecessors Queens Consorts of England from the time of the Reformation, and has been ever highly esteemed as a mark of honour and dignity.

"Her majesty has always been impressed with the strongest feelings of regret that the King should have yielded to any advice by which she should be excluded, and thereby degraded in the estimation both of his majesty's subjects and of foreign nations. All further proceedings against her majesty being now finally abandoned, the Queen solicits your majesty as an act of justice and grace to permit her the enjoyment of that privilege now so long withheld.

"The Queen with reluctance makes this her appeal to your majesty, and earnestly prays that this, her only request, may be granted.

"CAROLINE R."

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Carlton House, Wednesday, March 21st, 1821.

"The King has the pleasure to return to Lord Liverpool the Queen's note and petition, and has no doubt that his lordship will return a proper answer to each.

"The King congratulates Lord Liverpool upon the prospect of his being relieved from a disagreeable duty to-morrow."

THE QUEEN TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"29the of April.

"The Queen, after having been a considerable time of receiving a answer from Lord Liverpool, in consequence of the last conversation that passed between his Lordship and Doctor Lushington:

"Her majesty feels herself under the necessity to establish herself in England, and communicates to Lord Liverpool that the Queen intends to be present at the Coronation, and requests him to present the inclosed letter to his majesty.

"CAROLINE R."

THE SAME.

"Brandenbourgh House, Sunday, 29th of April, 1821.

"The Queen from circumstances being obliged to remain in England, she requests the King will be pleased to command those Ladies of the first Rank his majesty may think the most proper in this Realms, to attend the Queen on the day of the Coronation, of which her majesty is informed is now fixed, and also to name such Ladies which will be required to bear Her majesty's Train on that day.

"The Queen being particularly anxious to submit to the good Taste of his majesty, most earnestly entreate the King to informe the Queen in what Dresse the King wishes the Queen to appear in, on that day, at the Coronation.

"CAROLINE R."

LORD LIVERPOOL TO THE KING.

"Fife House, 30th April, 1821.

"Lord Liverpool has the honour to send your Majesty a letter addressed to your majesty by the Queen, and likewise a copy of a letter from the Queen to Lord Liverpool.

"The communication from Dr. Lushington to which the Queen refers took place somewhat more than a fortnight since."

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Most private.]

"Brighton, May 1st, 1821.

"The King has just received the box from Lord Liverpool, containing the copy of a letter from the Queen to Lord Liverpool, and Lord Liverpool's account of a conversation which

took place a short time since between Lord Liverpool and Dr. Lushington, referred to in the Queen's letter to Lord Liverpool, and a letter from the Queen addressed to the King.

"The King highly approves of the line and of the tone taken by Lord Liverpool in his conversation with Dr. Lushington. The King, however, entertains considerable doubts whether some decided notice should not be taken of the 'threat' (as Lord Liverpool justly terms it) held out by the Queen in her letter to Lord Liverpool, 'of her intention of being present at the coronation.' Had such an intimation reached Lord Liverpool merely in the shape of an idle report or of a fabrication, such as almost every day produces, the King would then entirely concur with Lord Liverpool's opinion that it would not justify any direct notice being taken of it.

"The matter here, however, stands widely different, as the Queen has decidedly and pointedly specified to Lord Liverpool that it is her intention to obtrude herself at the King's coronation. If, therefore, the subject were suffered to pass over in utter silence after this express and positive declaration on the part of the Queen, officially communicated by her under her own hand to Lord Liverpool as the King's first minister, the Queen, on the one hand, might have some sort of colour to assume that it had never been formally notified to her, as it is now the King's intention that it shall be, that she should never be suffered by the King, under any circumstances, to appear at that most solemn ceremony, the law having placed the entire control upon that head in the hands and at the pleasure of the King; while, on the other hand, she might attribute such silence to an unworthy timidity on the part of the King and of his Government, as well as invidiously pretend that her intimation upon this point had not only not been treated with common civility, but had been contemptuously disregarded.

"Lord Liverpool will observe that the King returns unopened the letter addressed by the Queen to the King. This is only in conformity to a resolution adopted more than twenty years ago, and since invariably adhered to by the King (but which must have escaped Lord Liverpool's recollection) that the King would never again receive or open any letter or paper addressed to him personally by the Queen.

"The King will only further suggest to Lord Liverpool the propriety of postponing any reply or communication whatsoever upon this subject to the Queen until after the Court at Buckingham House on Thursday next. From what so recently occurred with respect to the last drawing-room, the King thinks that Lord Liverpool will clearly perceive the wisdom of this precaution."

LORD LIVERPOOL TO THE QUEEN.

"Fife House, May 4th, 1821.

"Lord Liverpool has the honour to inform the Queen that, as it has been his majesty's invariable determination for some years to receive no communication from the Queen except through his Government, the King directed Lord Liverpool to open the Queen's letter; and, Lord Liverpool having laid the substance of it before his majesty, the King has commanded Lord Liverpool to say in answer that it is his Majesty's prerogative to regulate the ceremonial of his coronation in such manner as he may think fit; that the Queen can form no part of that ceremonial, except in consequence of a distinct authority from the King, and that it is not his majesty's intention under the present circumstances to give any such authority.

"Lord Liverpool thinks it must be unnecessary, in consequence of this communication, to notice the other points in the Queen's letter, but he will further add that the King has dispensed with the attendance of all ladies upon his coronation."

THE QUEEN TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Brandenbourgh House, Saturday, May 5th.

"The Queen is much surprised at Lord Liverpool's answer, and assures the Earl that her majesty is determined to attend at the coronation; the Queen considering it as one of her rights and privileges, which her majesty is resolved ever to maintain."

LORD LIVERPOOL TO THE KING.

"Fife House, May 5th, 1821.

"Lord Liverpool has the honour to send your majesty the answer which he has received from the Queen. Lord Liverpool humbly submits that the correspondence would better end here, at least for the present. The threat is an empty threat, which the Queen has evidently not the power of carrying into execution, and must appear to have been made solely with a view to extorting money.

"Lord Liverpool will request your majesty to be pleased to return the Queen's letter. Lord Liverpool has directed a copy to be prepared for your majesty of the whole correspondence."

"Fife House, May 7th, 1821.

"Lord Liverpool has received the King's commands, in consequence of the last communication of the Queen to Lord Liverpool of the 5th inst., to inform the Queen that his majesty having determined that the Queen shall form no part of the ceremonial of his coronation, it is therefore the royal pleasure that the Queen shall not attend the said ceremony."

The Queen persisting in her demand to be crowned, she was at last referred to the Privy Council, when the question was argued by her counsel. A curious array of precedents showed that most of the queens had not been crowned with their husbands, and some not at all. The King therefore, having the discretion, declined to sanction her being crowned with him.

The eagerness to be present was extraordinary, which a dispute that arose between the Chamberlain and other high functionaries, as to who were entitled to give away seats in Westminster Hall, tended to increase. The whole area between the Abbey and the Hall was filled with grand-stands and galleries. The Dean and Chapter farmed out the side aisle of the Abbey—as it was their privilege—to a speculator, to be fitted up with boxes, which he let at an enormous price. Special envoys came from all the Courts. Every peer was given five tickets, all the great functionaries had a certain number, but the Chamberlain and High Steward had the distribution of three and four thousand apiece respectively.

On the eve of the ceremonial the King came to stay at the Speaker's, while at one in the morning the guests began to arrive. At that hour, indeed, all the streets were crowded and blocked with carriages. Some slept in the stands: the Guards were under arms all the night. At ten o'clock his Majesty appeared, and a procession was formed in Westminster Hall. He entered at ten o'clock, wearing his magnificent robes, said to have cost £25,000. The cost of the jewels for the coronation was enormous, and the amount was swelled by the addition of costly ornaments which his Majesty obtained for one of his favourites, which it was attempted to include in the estimate. This was discovered by Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, and exposed, which entailed his fall and banishment. The King's herbwoman, attended by six maids, led the way. Dignitaries, lay and ecclesiastical, followed. English, Irish, and Scotch lords, bearing the standards of their respective countries. The Knights of the Bath, in blue and silver, succeeded; and it was noted that of all the brilliant figures Lord Londonderry, the only one who wore the

full robes of the Garter, was the most striking and imposing. There was but one noble surviving who had walked at the coronation of George III.—the Duke of Gordon—but he was too infirm to attend. The King was dreadfully exhausted, the heat adding to his fatigue, and it was thought he would have fainted. The splendid scene that waited him at the Abbey restored him. The weight of his cloak, though the train was borne by seven supporters, added to his distress. Then the religious rites, of great length, began—the anointing, a sermon, the taking the Sacrament, when the Archbishop prayed that "he might observe the commandments of God."*

In the evening followed the grand banquet in Westminster Hall, a more magnificent scene still. A sort of scene-painter's Gothic archway, with folding gates, had been erected at the bottom, through which the Duke of Wellington and Lord Anglesey and others rode up to do service. The excitement rose to its height when the well-known spectacle of the challenge was performed. Young Dymoke, the hereditary champion, in full armour, rode in —his horse was furnished from a circus—and three different times flung down his gauntlet, while the challenge was proclaimed by a herald. The King drank to him from a gold cup, and he drank to the King, receiving the goblet "as his fee." He retired backwards.† It is a pity that this good old ceremony has been abolished. It was related as a prodigy of culinary organisation, that 240 tureens of soup, 7000 lb. of beef, 20,000 lb. of mutton, etc., were served; but in our time the ordinary professional caterer would smile at such an insignificant call on his exertions.‡

This great day thus passed over with infinite success for all concerned, save the unhappy Queen, who was persuaded to attempt the profitless venture of forcing herself on the ceremonies. At an early hour she set off in her coach and six, attended by Lord Hood, who, as we shall see, was to figure later in the King's interest. After having passed in, on a ticket, not her own, and been refused admittance at various entrances, the following scene took place on her first attempt. A number of soldiers drew across her path, and she was asked for her ticket.

* When the King returned from St. Edward's Chapel, where some of the rites had taken place, he found the Abbey almost deserted by the tired peers and peeresses, "but he moved about with great good-humour," and spoke to those he knew.

† The hero of a hundred fights had also to back his steed, which was found embarrassing to Lord Hood, whose horse was not well bitted.

‡ There were 100 dozens of champagne, 200 of claret, and 350,000 of port and sherry. Three thousand persons were entertained in adjoining rooms.

Lord Hood said: "Don't you know your Queen? She needs no ticket." The official said he had his orders, which were, to admit no one without a ticket. Lord Hood then produced his ticket, and the man said, according to the report, that she might enter upon that. She hesitated, then declined.* What would have occurred had she obtained permission—whether she would have advanced and taken her place beside her consort, on which some unseemly scene would have followed—it would be difficult to say; but it was agreed by friends and enemies that it was an undignified and fruitless proceeding, as she attempted it; and that, if attempted at all, it should have been carried through with daring and resolution. As she retreated baffled, scornful jeers from the crowd—whose sympathies are often forfeited by defeat or repulse—followed her.

From this time all her proceedings were marked with worse than the old recklessness. On that evening she wrote to the Duke of Norfolk, demanding in consequence "of the insult of that morning," to be crowned by herself within a week; as the preparations being ready, it would save expense to the nation! A few nights later, Denman went to see her, and found her with a large party, dancing, laughing, and romping, "but he saw that her spirits were frightfully overstrained." Indeed, her friends held that she had received her death-blow in that mortification. But this may be fairly doubted, as her nerves were not of such delicate texture.

This magnificent celebration being happily concluded, to his great glory, the King was now free to consider other schemes—and notably to cultivate his favourite passion for building. We may review the state of affairs to which his mania for rebuilding or altering his two palaces of Windsor and Buckingham House had brought him. The year before his death the account stood thus:

	Original Estimate.	Cost.	Excess.
Windsor Castle, building .	£150,000 ...	£325,000 ...	£175,000
State Apartments . .	(Unknown)		
Furniture, etc. . . .	£150,000 ...	£167,000 ...	£17,000
Lands	...	£58,000 ...	
Total . .	£300,000	£550,000	£250,000

Thus here was an unwarranted debt of £250,000 incurred. We turn to Buckingham House, and find that the estimate was £270,000, the actual cost £482,000—an excess of £212,000—making nearly half a million together. But even this was not all.

* This part of the story seems improbable, as it is likely the tickets were personal and not transferable.

The net revenue of the Woods and Forests, reaching a surplus of £70,000 a-year, had been allotted to pay for the building as it went on; but it was found out that this ready-money had been seized on and devoted to other building purposes, leaving but a balance of £4000 a-year for the palaces.* How these unlawful plunderings were tolerated is inconceivable. An advance out of moneys owing by the French Government was then made, equally unjustifiable, and amounting to £250,000. On the other hand, it must be mentioned that it was calculated that the rents of the new Carlton House Terrace would sell for £70,000. Nash, his favourite architect, had been concerned in all his plans for the Pavilion and the new Regent quarter. These proceedings show that it was not so unprecedented a thing for ministers to allow the King to help himself to "odds and ends" of the public moneys as Mr. Herries, in his Memoir of his father, would make out. It is impossible that the Secretary to the Treasury should not have at least known of these practices. The result, however, was to raze, not St. James' Palace,† but Carlton House, and to take Buckingham House in hand for restoration, or rather rebuilding. Accordingly, in 1825, it was handed over to the builders and architect, and at the King's death was left an unfinished pile. The King took his favourite mode of planning piecemeal and altering bit by bit, to which his favourite was obliged to adapt his plans and suggestions. It should, however, be stated that the Duke of Montrose assured Lord Colchester that a calculation had been made of the repairs necessary for Carlton House, and also for those of Buckingham House, and that there was but little difference between them.

"Other alterations of an architectural sort are also proceeding in London," wrote Lord Colchester later. "The King's new palace, on the site of Buckingham House, is covered in; the Duke of York's, on the site of his former house, is sold in its unfinished state to Lord Stafford for £80,000; and he gives

* It had been thus spent:

On account of York House	£57,000
Finishing Windsor	19,450
Ditto, New Carlton House	11,073
Ditto, Downing Street	3,017
Redemption of Land Tax, Carlton House	22,022
Alterations, St. James's Park	6,000
	£118,562

† "Life of Lord Liverpool," v. p. 420. This proposal, already referred to, probably concerns the grounds round St. James's Palace gardens, etc., and does not, as Mr. Yonge thinks, imply that the palace was to be razed. The strict meaning, however, seems to convey that the palace was to be levelled.

£30,000 more to Lord Gower to finish it for his residence. Carlton House has nearly disappeared; and the new terrace of houses towards the Mall is rising rapidly; the grass part of St. James's Park is to be laid out in shrubberies like Regent's Park. New gateways, colonnaded, are already built at Hyde Park Corner, leading on one side into the King's garden by Constitution Hill, and on the other side by the Duke of Wellington's house, into Hyde Park. A new bridge of five arches has been thrown across the Serpentine, at the end nearest to Kensington Gardens; and a new carriage drive has been made round the whole of the Park north of the Serpentine, which makes a most desirable addition to the airing ground for carriages and equestrians."

To the Londoner few objects are more familiar than the Marble Arch, the Oxford Street entrance to the Park. This monument, suggested by his majesty and copied from that of Constantine at Rome, stood within living memory in front of Buckingham Palace. It has no doubt puzzled the spectator what could have been the intention in erecting this rather bald and costly gateway; but, it seems, it was designed to commemorate the glories of his majesty, much as the great French monarch erected *flamboyant* memorials of himself, *à la gloire de Louis XIV.* On the summit was to have been an equestrian statue of the King by Chantrey; on each side bas-reliefs recording Trafalgar and Waterloo. The Duke's bust was to have been displayed on the pedestal of the equestrian statue, "between Europe and Asia," while on various other portions were to have been shown the King "approving the plan of the campaign," the King "rewarding the Duke of Wellington after Waterloo." Statues of the inferior officers were to have been disposed about the monument. The cost would have been enormous, and the King was prudent enough to set the plan aside.*

At this time Mr. Canning began to reappear upon the scene; and it was to be expected that such an intellect as his was, even when he affected by resignation to efface himself, should let its force be felt. Lord Liverpool, over whom he exercised an extraordinary influence, seemed to look for the first opportunity to get his aid once more; and when Lord Sidmouth, in June, 1821, pro-

* Two enormous blocks of Carrara marble, which had been ordered by Napoleon for the purpose of making some commemoration of his victories, had been presented to his Majesty by the Duke of Tuscany. It was determined to fashion out of them an enormous Waterloo vase, twenty feet high, and the talents of Westmacott, the sculptor, were employed for the purpose; but the King requiring that his figure should be conspicuous among the group of victors, this idea was also abandoned.

posed retiring, and there was to be a redistribution of offices, he suggested to the King "that the first offer must be made to Mr. Canning, whom he proposed to place at the Admiralty." The King, however, who liked nursing his resentments and giving effect to them, as a mode of adding to his importance, declined to make any change. This led to a regular discussion, in which the point was pressed on the King, much to his annoyance. As he (Lord Liverpool) had just lost his wife, the Cabinet took the matter in hand. In a conversation with Lord Sidmouth, his majesty explained that "he did not mean to proscribe Mr. Canning altogether, nor to express his determination to exclude him for ever from the Cabinet; he only begged not to have him pressed on him at present, not being prepared, on the sudden, to give him that full confidence which a Cabinet minister had a right to expect; that he had nothing like enmity to Mr. Canning; that, on the contrary, if Mr. Canning should attend the levee, he would receive him with the greatest civility; and that, if Mr. Canning had other objects, he would gladly promote them."

That he had resentment was only too certain; and he later declared that "he had made a vow" never to admit him. Mr. Canning's secretary tells us that the cause of this dislike was, not his share in opposition to the prosecution of the Queen, but the conduct of his supporters in the House of Lords, who, though followers of the Government, had thought it right to adopt his course. The King, however, attributed it to his instigation.

Lord Liverpool, however, in his bereavement, urged the point, and to his friends commented bitterly on the unworthy pretexts urged. It was proscription, he said. The objection was "one of personal pique and resentment." "But you must know," he wrote to a friend, "what has been passing behind the scenes." This feeling on the part of the King "has been the cause of all our past errors." He even charged him with a secret scheme for destroying the Government when the opportunity offered. If the King persisted, "he must look out for another minister." The King, ever fertile in resources, then affected to be eager to have Lord Sidmouth with him on his journey to Ireland, which would postpone the issue, and Mr. Canning himself begged that he might not be pressed; on which Lord Liverpool gave way for the present, declaring however that the question was only adjourned.

There was a bitterness in this discussion which the question itself does not account for, and which was really owing to a matter of a private character which had inflamed the King to an extraordinary degree. It was indeed to add to his long roll of personal feelings, and was the cause of rooted dislike which from

this hour he bore to the Prime Minister. A young clergyman named Sumner had been selected as tutor by Lord Conyngham for his two sons, and had taken them abroad to Geneva. The father, it seems, had promised that an annuity or a benefice was to be the reward of his services.* In 1820 this pupil, Lord Francis Conyngham, had been appointed Master of the Robes and First Groom of the Chamber to the King, whose devotion to the family was now beginning to declare itself. The pupil had often sounded his praises to his Majesty, who took as great a delight in new faces and persons that were likely to please him, as a sultan does in favourites. His majesty expressed a wish to see him, and he was sent for to Brighton, dined at the Pavilion, and "had a conversation of three hours, standing."

The courtiers, we are told, looked grave, but with nice forecast, told him his fortune was made. The following year, in April, 1821, a canonry at Windsor fell vacant, and the King at once named the new favourite, a young man of thirty years old and a mere curate, for the canon's office. But Lord Liverpool boldly and decidedly declined to adopt this recommendation, and told the King that it "would be most injurious to his interests and give great umbrage to the Church." He added, however, that to help his majesty out of the difficulty, he was willing to recommend the clergyman for a benefice and advance him afterwards.

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Brighton, April 13th, 1821.

"It is with considerable regret that the King has received Lord Liverpool's letter of yesterday, and the more as the King feels that ever since the appointment of Lord Liverpool as his First Minister he has not merely shown an uniform desire not to thwart any views of Lord Liverpool or of his friends in the disposal of the patronage of the Crown; but, on the contrary, to oblige Lord Liverpool, and to give every support in his power to an Administration created by himself, the King has yielded every personal feeling.

"In illustration of which the King need only draw Lord

* This arrangement naturally roused some speculation, and it was often repeated that this was only the reward for a more substantial service than merely education, in the shape of having saved his eldest charge from an improvident marriage with a young Swiss girl, by marrying her himself. This, however, it is only fair to state, has been distinctly denied by his family; and it must be said that the clergyman proved an excellent divine and bishop, with whose career so shrewd a stroke was scarcely consistent.

Liverpool's attention to two very recent events, amongst numberless others; namely—the removal of Lord Fife (a measure certainly painful to the King's private feelings), and the disregard of the King's desire (conveyed to Lord Liverpool through Sir Benjamin Bloomfield) 'that Mr. B. Paget should succeed to the office of Receiver-General.' Notwithstanding which, the appointment of another individual (however eligible) took place without further reference to the King.

"Under so extraordinary a proceeding did the King withhold his signature to the warrant of appointment? or did the King call upon Lord Liverpool to forfeit his promise or his word? The King might also add the instance in which he sacrificed the most painful personal feelings and opinions to the advice and earnest desire of Lord Liverpool 'that the King should not accept the resignation of Mr. Canning, but suffer him to remain in his councils,' in spite of the very unwarrantable conduct of that gentleman (as a member of the Cabinet) in his place in Parliament.

"The question of this nomination to the vacant canonry of Windsor does not rest upon the selection which the King has made for that appointment, nor does the King doubt the sincerity of Lord Liverpool's desire to make a suitable provision in lieu of that destined by the King for Mr. Sumner; but there are principles paramount to all other considerations which will ever guide the King in his course through life. Lord Liverpool, in his desire to relieve the King from any embarrassment which the present case may occasion, appears solely to have directed his view to the policy or impolicy of this nomination, and wholly to have disregarded that vital point of the transaction which involves the good faith and honour of his sovereign.

"The King, therefore, sees no reason to alter his determination of appointing Mr. Sumner to the vacant canonry of Windsor; and, however willing the King might be to give up his own opinions to Lord Liverpool's wishes, it is no longer a question of the propriety of this little appointment (as the King has already stated), but whether the King's word is to be held sacred or is to be of no avail.

"The King acquainted Lord Liverpool that the appointment was given by himself alone, unsolicited by ——, or at the instance of any private friend of the King's or of Mr. Sumner's. His merit and his character were his only recommendations, and the King thinks such recommendations more calculated to do honour and to give satisfaction than to give 'umbrage' to the Church."

Extraordinary offices seemed to become vacant of a sudden

for the special benefit of the man whom the King was eager to honour.

Lord Liverpool, in reply, vindicated himself, but declined positively to change his resolution—a determination infinitely creditable to his firmness.

But it is amusing to read the excitement produced at the Castle by this contention. "If you had seen the King," wrote his pupil to the candidate, "you would have given up all your own feelings and have been entirely interested in his. I never saw anything like it. He was quite in despair." Expresses were sent to the clergyman that "he might not suffer more than could be avoided." "There never was anything which threw such a gloom of despair upon all our faces. But, as the King most kindly quoted, when he saw my agony, 'Nil desperandum,' etc. You cannot conceive what he has suffered on this occasion. He is without exception the best-hearted man that ever lived." The injured but fortunate divine was at once made King's chaplain, and given a capital house at Windsor, and was informed that other arrangements were in progress. This took the shape of librarian at Carlton House; vicarship of St. Helen's, Abingdon; Canon of Worcester in the following year.

But the King was "mortally wounded" by the transaction, and Lord Mount-Charles, with perfect truth, declared "he would never forget it." For a more experienced judge, the Duke of Wellington, writing to Lord Liverpool a little later, assured him that "the King has never forgiven your opposition in the case of Sumner. This feeling has influenced every action of his life in relation to his Government from that moment; and, I believe, to more than one of us he avowed that his objection to Mr. Canning was, that his accession to the Government was peculiarly desirable to you. Nothing could be more unjust or more unfair than this feeling; and, as there is not one of your colleagues who did not highly approve of what you did respecting Sumner, so there is not one of them who would not suffer with you all the consequences of that act."

What a picture of weakness and folly! We may smile at the scene at Windsor—the *camarilla's* "agony," the agitated King, and the whole worked up by the courtiers and flatterers into a tempest. The lucky divine was consoled by being made librarian at Carlton House, Vicar of St. Helen's, Abingdon, Canon of Worcester in the succeeding year, Chaplain in Ordinary, Clerk of the Closet, and three years later was offered the bishopric of Jamaica. But here he hesitated, and consulted the excellent Knighton as to its being acceptable to his Majesty, owning, however, that he would "be heartless and profligate" to over-

look such objections as to the health of his little children, etc However, he went down to see the King, who declared he would leave him "unbiassed." The King indeed said he was advancing in years, and did not now easily attach himself to new faces: he must now expect many and frequent illnesses, "when it was a satisfaction to him to know that I was at hand, that I suited him, that he had other views for me." In short, he felt it a duty to comply with the King's wishes. "I hope," wrote Mr. Sumner to his lady, "you know and think how the King deserves to be loved. He could not talk of the possibility of my leaving England, without shedding tears. He behaved most beautifully. In the meantime, I am quite sure it is better, spiritually speaking, to have been ready and desirous to go; temporarily speaking, it may be better for me to stay."

And so it was to prove with singular rapidity. The following year a stall at Canterbury was offered by Lord Liverpool, who nicely suggested that "it would in no way interfere with any further promotion;" on which his Majesty suggested that "he should be the next bishop," which Sir W. Knighton declared was done by the King in the most agreeable way. "So now, my dear friend," writes the physician, "you may begin to do everything as if you were at this moment a bishop. Be so good as to get rid of your shirt-frill and your trowsers. It is the King's wish you should immediately take your doctor's degree."

Next year he became Bishop of Llandaff. But this was a poor Welsh thing, so the year after the fortunate divine received the following from his patron:

THE KING TO THE BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.

"Royal Lodge, November 18, 1827.

"My dear Bishop,

"The very moment I was informed of the death of the Bishop of Winchester, I nominated you his successor. In doing this I have not only consulted what is most agreeable to my own feelings, but what my conscience tells me will be most beneficial to the see of Winchester, and also for the good of the Church in general.

"Yours sincerely,

"G. R."

The following year his brother became Bishop of Chester.

When the King returned from Hanover, a new plan for disposing of Mr. Canning released the King from the prospect of having his services forced upon him. There was a plan of sending him

as Governor-General to India. Lord Hastings had signified his wish—in an informal way, as it proved—to be released from that office, and the directors were willing to offer it to Mr. Canning. The King, to use his father's expression, had "jumped" at this solution. He was so eager indeed, that when it was found that Lord Hastings's resignation was a sort of vicarious one, and full of difficulties to act upon, the King pressed it, and insisted it should be handed to the directors. In his eagerness he had even declared that otherwise he should have found no objection to receiving Mr. Canning among his ministers. It, however, came to nothing, as the resignation was found to be inoperative. Meanwhile the offices had been filled up by recruits from the Grenville section of the Opposition, all pro-Catholics, and the King might congratulate himself on his adroit management. As Canning wrote bitterly, he was in the position of having declined India, which was not vacant, "and there has been no other proposal made to me since this failure." This, it will be seen, was the first of many such struggles in which the ministers were to be engaged.

The power and fertility of resource shown by the King in resisting what was objectionable to him would have commanded admiration, if displayed on worthier occasions and directed by a probability of success; but it was his fate to choose occasions where his case was weak, and he usually only succeeded in protracting his surrender. He mistook the signs of the crisis, and either resisted where he should have yielded, or yielded where he might have resisted.

Yet he had told the Irish that instead of opposing the union they should have "made terms." His tactics, when he found Mr. Canning was about to be forced upon him, were ingenious, if not crafty. The secret of his new dislike to the minister was, as Canning informed his secretary, a belief that he, while withdrawing himself from the prosecution of his Queen, had secretly urged his friends in the House of Lords to strenuous opposition. When the King learned that the East Indian directors were anxious to appoint Mr. Canning Governor-General, with rather suspicious ardour he became an eager supporter of the plan. Mr. Canning himself relates the incident: "In June last there was a contest between Liverpool and the King, for and against my readmission into office. I then begged not to be pressed upon the King. On his Majesty's return from Ireland, he expressly forbade Liverpool to open the subject, and it was adjourned till the return from Hanover. Soon after the King's departure for Hanover the chairman of the Court of Directors communicated to me a letter from Lord Hastings, implying in the clearest manner his (Lord Hastings's) wish to hear that a successor

to him had been appointed. I consented to be named—subject, of course, to the King's being prepared to approve the nomination." Mr. Canning goes on to say that not many days after this communication Colonel Doyle, Lord Hastings's most confidential friend, came to say that the resignation was a misapprehension, and that he knew Lord Hastings had no intention of resigning. And presently it was discovered that such vicarious resignation would be informal and have no effect. "Here was an end of the vacancy, which, however, had been announced to the King. The King had jumped at the solution of difficulties which was opened to him by the appointment to India. His Majesty undertook to do anything in his power to make Lord Hastings's resignation easy to him; and he determined, on his return to England, to see Colonel Doyle himself, and to learn whether the resignation so sent to him (as has been described) might not now be made available. I understand his Majesty to have said at the same time that, if he could not succeed in opening India, he would waive his objection to the arrangement proposed in June. In this state things were when I saw Lord Liverpool after the King's return from Hanover." He concluded by declaring that the "failure, I presume, everybody will attribute (as I do in my own mind) not to the ill-disposition of the Government, but to the unaltered resentment of the King." His Majesty had, however, to yield, and Mr. Canning became Foreign Secretary.

THE KING TO LORD ELDON.

"Carlton Palace, Saturday night, July 7th, 1821.

"My dear Friend,

"I must thank you for your affectionate letter,* which is very acceptable to my feelings: God grant that you may long live to enjoy the honours so justly due to your eminent talents and distinguished services. I shall hope to see you early in the morning, as I have much to say to you.

"Always, my dear Friend,

"Very affectionately yours,

"G. R."

THE SAME.

"Thursday evening, 6 o'clock, July 26th, 1821.

"My dear Chancellor,

"I delay not a moment thanking you for your affectionate note. I have known you, and, with truth I do add, that I have

* Acknowledgment for his earldom.

loved and esteemed you as a friend, much too long for a moment to entertain a thought that you would not have presented yourself both at the levee yesterday, as well as the Drawing Room this day, if it had been morally possible for you to have done so. If there be any blame, it rests with me, for not having sent to inquire after you, but which I desire you will not impute to forgetfulness on my side, but to the constant worry and hurly-burly I have been perpetually kept in for the last fortnight.

"I remain, my dear Lord,

"Always your most affectionate Friend,

"G. R.

"P.S.—I shall rejoice, if you are able to come to me, to see you on Sunday as usual."

THE SAME.

"Brighton, Dec. 26th, 1821.

"My dear Friend,

"You flattered me that when you had relaxation from business you would make me a short visit. It strikes me that next Monday and Tuesday are the two most probable days to afford you such an opportunity; therefore, if this should be so, and unless you have formed any pleasanter scheme for yourself, pray come to me then. I believe it will be necessary for you to swear in one or two of my state servants, the most of whom you will find assembled here; therefore pray be properly prepared. I hope it is not necessary for me to add how truly happy I should be, if our dear and good friend Lord Stowell would accompany you. A hearty welcome, good and warm beds, turkey and chine, and last, though not least in love, liver and crow, are the order of the day.

"Ever, my dear Lord,

"Most sincerely yours,

"G. R.

"P.S.—N.B. No Church preferment will be requested on the present occasion."

Excited by the plaudits that attended him during this brilliant show, the King now conceived the plan of travelling through the various portions of his dominions. His flatterers had, no doubt, persuaded him that he was now popular, and that this proceeding of showing himself to his people would further stimulate their loyalty. In this and the following year, he made progresses through Ireland, Scotland, and Hanover, which, taken with the coronation and his failing health, must have been very fatiguing to his Majesty.

The news that the King was coming to Ireland caused unbounded excitement in that portion of his dominions, of which evidence is found in the fact that the religious parties agreed to hold a truce for the occasion, the Lord Mayor sending a message to Lord Fingal to announce that "King William's statue should not be dressed" on the usual occasion. All united in the joyful preparations. Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, who had been despatched as *avant courier*, was fêted at a public dinner of all factions, at which he struck the key-note of the general rapturous strain which was to characterise future proceedings, declaring that "no sooner was the crown on his master's head than he had determined to visit Ireland." Lord Sidmouth, the Secretary of State, though starting later, arrived at Phœnix Park a little in advance, where was Mr. C. Grant, the Irish Secretary, who was entertaining Lord Londonderry and the ministers in attendance on the King. His Majesty started from Carlton House on July 31st, 1821, "at twenty minutes before twelve," and at half-past five arrived at Portsmouth, where he instantly went on board his own "yatch," as it was spelled then, the Royal George. But a most tedious and disagreeable journey was before him, and not until a fortnight was he able to set foot on Irish soil. On reaching Holyhead, news that the Queen was almost *in extremis* reached him, and the King determined to go to his friend Lord Anglesey—"Paget"—whose place was close by, and wait for news.

THE KING TO SIR W. KNIGHTON.

"Off Holyhead, August 10th, 1821.

"Dearest Friend,

"As I know you like brevity in writing, I shall endeavour to be as concise as possible, and shall try to convey to you all the matter possible in the smallest compass.

"I must first thank you for your kind letters, the last of which I have now just received. You need not be under any apprehension that every regard to decorum and decency will not be strictly observed.

"I have now been at anchor in this harbour ever since Monday night at half-past eleven, when we received the first intimation of the Queen's indisposition.

"On Tuesday at noon, as I had heard nothing from my friend Lord Sidmouth, who had passed over to the other coast some hours before, we took up our anchorage here. We had reason to know he had heard the report before he left Holyhead; and it was determined, as the best medium-line that could be

adopted until I could hear from him, that I should proceed for twelve hours to Lord Anglesey's.

"Accordingly I wrote to Lord Sidmouth and Bloomfield, to acquaint them with the communication I had received respecting the Queen, to account for the delay in my not proceeding to Ireland, and desiring Lord Sidmouth's advice as to what I had best do, and that he would make all the arrangements which might be necessary under existing circumstances.

"I returned from Plasnewydd to my yatch here about four o'clock on the next day (Wednesday), and found Lord Sidmouth just disembarked and ready to receive me. He stayed about two hours with me on board, and then again took his passage in the steamboat, having arranged with me, that if the accounts from London of the Queen the next day should represent her to be in an improved state, that then we should set sail as quickly as possible, and land at Dunleary, and make my public *entrée* at Dublin on that day (Friday); although he had already taken measures for a private entry if matters should be worse, as it was utterly impossible for me under any circumstances not to proceed now to Ireland, where public notice would be given that I should observe the strictest privacy for some days, until we were acquainted either with the Queen's recovery or her demise, and till after the body should be interred.

"Lord Londonderry fortunately arrived the next morning after Lord Sidmouth left me—that is to say, yesterday (Thursday), before seven o'clock in the morning—and has remained with me, and will continue to do so till I have set my foot on the Irish shore. He approved of all the arrangements I had made with Lord Sidmouth as the best possible, and with every view I had taken of the whole circumstance: and it is now determined that either in the course of the day, or as soon as possible as the wind and weather will permit (but which at present does not appear very encouraging), we are to set sail, either in the yatch alone or by steam, to Ireland; to make Howth (about five miles from Dublin), and to proceed without any sort of show or display to Phœnix Park, without entering or passing through Dublin at all. My arrival there will then be publicly announced, and that the strictest privacy for a few days will be observed, as far as proper decency and decorum may require; and that after that, the day will be announced when I shall make my public *entrée*, and when all public ceremonies and rejoicings will commence.

"Continue, I conjure you, from time to time, and constantly if you can, to let me hear from you, be it only that "all is well;" for even this is a security and comfort to me that you cannot imagine; it is utterly impossible for me to tell you how un-

comfortable and how miserable I always feel when I have you not immediately at my elbow. You may, then, judge what I do now at this moment feel, and what I have gone through without you near me, during all these recent perplexities and difficulties. You are too well acquainted with the warmth of my feelings towards you to render it necessary for me to add a syllable more upon that head, dear and best of friends, except that I am always,

"Most affectionately yours,
"G. R."

Here the unexpected news of the Queen's death reached him, and Lord Sidmouth, fearful of some unbecoming step being taken, hurried over to Holyhead, to press on his Majesty the necessity of a decent retirement, for at least a short space.* Nothing could be more unfortunate; but it was curious that her illness seems to have commenced on the very day that the King set off, on which evening she went to the theatre to see Mr. Kean's performance. The unhappy lady's sorrows had come to a close, and within a few days her remains were being transported back to that Brunswick which it was a pity she ever quitted.

On the following Sunday, the 12th of August, crowds were looking out to the sea at where Kingstown now rises, and Sir Benjamin was observed to be hurrying to the point of old Dunleary Harbour, then newly opened, at present a colliers' shelter. Presently "the Lightning steam-packet, Capt. Skinner," was seen to approach, and the anxious crowds rushing forward recognised the familiar, portly figure. "A quarter before three," says a loyal rapturous account, "they descried by glasses a steam-vessel, which, from the circumstance mentioned, excited strong sensations; about twenty minutes after, a second steam-vessel seemed to approach in the same course: no doubt remained but that his Majesty or some word from him would arrive in a short time. Within a few minutes of four the steam-packet closed in with Ireland's Eye, and immediately the royal carriage, which had taken Sir Benjamin Bloomfield down, was seen driving rapidly to the pier-head. At half-past four the Lightning steam-packet came to the projection in the west point of the pier. A breathless suspension of two minutes succeeded, the anxious hearts of the spectators beating high. At length some person, recognising his Majesty on board, cried,

* It seems to have been an anxious business, as the Secretary wrote to Mr. Hobhouse that "he would not trouble him with a detail of difficulties and vexations he had to deal with; but he endeavoured to reconcile himself to the service in which he was engaged," etc.

'The King!' when all enthusiastically exclaimed, 'The King! the King! God bless him.' Cheers echoed and re-echoed, which his Majesty, on hearing, stood forward and warmly returned, taking off his cap and winding it several times over his head. He was dressed in a blue frock, blue pantaloons, Hessian boots, a black cravat, white silk gloves, and a foraging cap with gold lace. His Majesty was a little browned from the weather. With him were Lords Londonderry, Thomond, Mount-Charles, Francis Conyngham, and Mr. Freeling, Secretary to the Post Office. A small ship ladder covered with carpeting was fixed to facilitate his landing. Some of his suite preceded his Majesty. When he reached the top of the ladder, which he did with great agility and without assistance, the pressure was so great that he was much incommoded. This could not be avoided; as almost every person present stood on the small tongue of land which projects from the pier, through them no convenient passage could be opened without forcing some persons into the water. His Majesty bore the inconvenience with much good humour, perceiving the cause. On seeing the Earl of Kingston, his Majesty exclaimed: 'Kingston, Kingston, you black-whiskered, good-natured fellow, I am happy to see you in this friendly country.' Having recognised Dennis Bowes Daily, he cordially shook hands with him, who in the very act was deprived of a watch valued sixty guineas and a pocket-book. Sir Benjamin Bloomfield having opened the door of the carriage, his Majesty stepped in: the cheers of all rent the air. Having turned round, and extending forth both his hands, he said with great emotion, 'God bless you all; I thank you from my heart.' Seemingly exhausted, he threw himself back again, and on the cheers being repeated, taking off his cap, bowed again and again. The cavalcade then drove straight to the lodge at the Phœnix, a distance of about eight or nine miles. On reaching the entrance to the demesne, some halted outside, fearing that proceeding further would be an intrusion. His Majesty, perceiving the delicacy, put out his hand and exclaimed: 'Come on, my friends.' Some of those who entered, having walked on the grass, were reprimanded by others for so doing. 'Oh!' said his Majesty, good-humouredly, 'don't mind the grass; let them walk where they please.' Having alighted from his carriage at the hall of the lodge, he addressed those round him, about a hundred in number, in the following words: 'In addressing you, I conceive I am addressing the nobility, gentry, and yeomen of Ireland. This is one of the happiest moments of my life. I feel pleased, being the first of my family that set foot on Irish ground. Early in my life I loved Ireland,

my heart was always with them. I rejoice at being amongst my faithful Irish friends. I always considered them such, and this day proves to me I am beloved by them. Circumstances of a delicate nature, to which it is needless to advert, have precluded me from visiting you sooner. I have had a fatiguing voyage. If I do not express myself as warmly as I ought, I beg you will not attribute it to want of affection. I am obliged to you for the kindness you evinced towards me this day; rank, station, and honour are nothing; to feel that I live in the hearts of my Irish subjects is to me the most exalted happiness. I assure you, my dear friends, I have an Irish heart, and will this night give a proof of my affection towards you, as I am sure you will towards me, by drinking your health in a bumper of whiskey punch.'"

Such was this amazing harangue, which produced a singular impression. The only *désagrément* was the arrival of the irrepressible Sir William Curtis, who seemed in this as in the Scotch visit, to compete with the King for public attention. It was found that with his yacht he had taken up the best "berth" in Dunleary Harbour, from which he was promptly removed.

Then set in a tumult of excited demonstrations, to which the impulsive King lent himself, declaring "that he had never felt himself a King till that time," as well as the no less excited crowd: both acted and reacted on one another to an extraordinary degree.

By the 17th, which time, it was thought, had exhausted the tribute due to bereavement, he entered Dublin in state. The procession was brilliant with banners, music, and show: his Majesty, seated in an open barouche drawn by eight horses, repeatedly pointing to an enormous shamrock displayed in his hat. In the midst of the shouts, he declared to Sir B. Bloomfield "he might be proud of his country: they are a noble people." At the Castle windows, as he looked on the acclaiming multitudes, he was observed to shed tears. Then followed illuminations, reviews, visit to the theatre, ball at the Mansion House, where a number of gentlemen improvised a body-guard, devising a uniform for the occasion, showing they knew one of their sovereign's weaknesses. "A silk doublet of coronation blue reached half way down the thigh, white casimere breeches, white silk stockings with blue rosettes at the knees and shoe ties formed the lower part of the dress, round the waist a pink silk sash, from which hung a rich dress sword and sword-knot, round the neck a white ruff, under which lay a broad pink ribbon, from which hung a coronation medal. The hat was blue, with the leaf turned up

before with a large plume of blue and white ostrich feathers. The weapon was a battle-axe, with a spear-head of burnished silver. As the King passed they shouldered their axes, and the lines had an imposing effect."

A magnificent circular ball-room of great size, still used for the Lord Mayor's balls, had been erected. After a handsome entertainment, the King retired, when speeches were made by Lord Londonderry and others, an alderman being so far carried away by his feelings as to give, "The glorious, immortal, and pious memory," which had nearly shipwrecked all. The King was infinitely displeased, but the matter was arranged. Then followed a visit to Slane, Lord Conyngham's place; an entertainment given by Trinity College, set off by music and such loyal tunes as "Rule Britannia." "They had scarcely commenced the first line of that inspiring anthem, when the royal countenance glowed with peculiar animation. At the words, 'the charter of the land,' his Majesty, slowly raising his right arm, and looking impressively at the assemblage of persons, seemed to renew in the only manner in which the Constitution would admit, the solemn compact that had been so recently entered into between the King and his people. During the chorus of each stanza the monarch's feelings uniformly assumed a higher tone, moving his hand, and keeping time with the orchestra, until the choir came to that part which prophetically declares that 'Britons never shall be slaves,' when in the glorious fervour of his wishes for the happiness of the inhabitants of the realm, he vigorously struck the table at every word." This was characteristic, and indeed all his behaviour through these pageants deserved the praise of being truly natural, though scarcely dignified. He generally wore a field marshal's uniform. At the Rotunda ball, we are told, "our fair countrywomen and gallant beaux were so much overawed with the presence of majesty, that they completely bungled their evolutions, which did not escape his penetration, for he was pleased to observe 'that in whatever else the Irish can distinguish themselves, they had no pretensions to dancing.'

"I will here mention an anecdote, which is one of the many instances of his Majesty's condescension. One of the attendants happened to go into the room where his Majesty was, at the Curragh, to look for Earl Talbot's hat, when the man incautiously took up the King's and was going away with it; his Majesty perceiving him, good-humouredly called out, 'Stop! stop! my friend, that is my hat; you must not take it.'*

* A little sketch is given of his conversation in his more moderate humour, and the favourable impression he left. It is certain, says Mr

"Before his Majesty left the racecourse at the Curragh he presented a superb whip to the Duke of Leinster, and, on handing it, turned round to Capt. Browne, the ranger. 'Mr. Browne,' said his Majesty, 'I intend this whip to be presented to the owner of the best horse in Ireland, weight for age, and I wish you to fix the weight and draw up an article according to which it is to be run for; and in addition to this whip, which is to be run for every year, I give a stake of one hundred guineas annually, as I wish to encourage the breed of strong horses in this country. You will take care to make the weights very heavy, and that no horse younger than four years old will be permitted to run for it."

After a visit to Powerscourt, in the county of Wicklow, he

Wallace, that he left upon the minds of persons very competent to judge, who then conversed with him for the first time, flattering impressions both of his capacity and demeanour. "Among those invited to meet him were two individuals holding office in Ireland, who had agreed in being strenuous opponents of the union, but now entertained adverse opinions on the Catholic claims. One of these, a person equally and eminently distinguished by his eloquence, wit, and personal character, sat at dinner opposite the King. Lady Conyngham whispered something in the royal ear. There was nothing extraordinary in this: but their eyes were directed to the opposite guest, who appeared somewhat disturbed by the seeming scrutiny. The King relieved him by saying: 'Bushe, you would hardly guess that Lady Conyngham has been repeating to me a passage from one of your speeches against the union. My early opinion was, that yours and Mr. Saurin's' (referring to the other functionary present) 'opposition to the measure was well founded; and since I have seen this glorious people, and the effects produced by it, that opinion is confirmed; but,' he added, as if correcting himself, 'I am sure you will agree with me in opinion that, now the measure is passed, you should both feel it your duty to oppose any attempt to repeal it with as much zeal as you originally opposed its taking place.' Both bowed assent; and the King continued:—'But you all committed a great mistake: you should have made terms, as the Scotch did; and you could have got any terms.' He then referred, with perfect familiarity, to the stipulations of the Scotch union. Mr. Saurin, the anti-Catholic functionary, said: 'And the Scotch further stipulated for the establishment of their national religion.' 'You are right,' said the King; 'they secured that point also; but—no, no' (again hastily checking himself), 'you must give no weight to what I have just said. It should not be supposed that I entertain an opinion from which inferences might be drawn that would lead to disappointment.' Mr. Saurin obviously meant that the Irish Parliament, at the union, should have stipulated for Protestant ascendency; but the King appeared to understand the Catholic by the national religion of Ireland, the emancipation of which should have been made a condition.

"Despatches were received in the course of the evening, announcing the riots at the funeral procession of the Queen; and he expressed, without the slightest reserve, in somewhat contemptuous terms, his dissatisfaction at the want of arrangement and energy on the part of the ministers. He then adverted to the firmness with which his father had acted in the riots of 1780; and spoke of him in a tone of solemn reverence, with the reality or well-acted appearances of strong emotion."

laid his hand on Lord Fingall's shoulder, saying: "To-morrow you shall see my letter. I think it will please." An allusion to a sort of proclamation of liberal treatment for the Catholics. He also paid a visit to Slane, Lord Conyngham's castle.

Finally, on Monday, September 3rd, the King embarked amid the most rapturous demonstrations and some eccentric displays. "At the edge of the shore, his Majesty declared, in answer to an address, and much affected: 'Gentlemen, I approached your shores with pleasure—I now quit them with regret. May God Almighty bless you all until we again meet.' Mr. O'Connell, with a deputation of ten others, on his knees, presented to his Majesty a laurel crown. His name was announced by Lord Sidmouth. The King took particular notice of this distinguished personage, shook him cordially by the hand, and accepted the tribute. Mr. O'Connell was loudly cheered as he retired. Before his Majesty descended the royal slip, appearing much affected, he addressed those around him: 'My friends! when I arrived in this beautiful country, my heart overflowed with joy—it is now depressed with sincere sorrow. I never felt sensations of more delight than since I came to Ireland—I cannot expect to feel any superior nor many equal, till I have the happiness of seeing you again. Whenever an opportunity offers wherein I can serve Ireland, I shall seize on it with eagerness. I am a man of few words. Short adieux are best. God bless you, my friends—God bless you all.' His Majesty then descending the sloping avenue that led to the barge, with great activity jumped into it. Four gentlemen (two of them in riding dresses, with spurs on) laid hold of the rudder and clung to it. Three fell into the water and swam to the shore, among whom was Sir Richard Steele, of Kilmainham memory. Another, more persevering than the rest, stuck to the rudder until his Majesty, apprehensive for his safety, ordered him to be conveyed on board a barge in attendance, and thanked him for his zeal." His Majesty at last got on board, but had the mortification of being detained four days in the harbour, owing to contrary winds. Not till Friday was the squadron able to put to sea. The voyage, however, was to be most disastrous. The King thus graphically tells the story of his sufferings and hair-breadth escapes to his confidant:

THE KING TO SIR W. KNIGHTON.

"Dearest Friend,

"I am sure that you will be quite surprised, after the long letter which I hope you received safe from me by this evening's post, dated from hence the day before yesterday, at

receiving another from me, and also from the same place, but which I hope will be the last; for I have now determined, by whatever inconvenience it may be attended, upon proceeding directly by land for London, and we finally start at five o'clock to-morrow, and hope to be with you before four o'clock on Saturday at Carlton House.

"There is no time for a florid description. We sailed again yesterday morning between four and five o'clock, with a most promising breeze in our favour, to make the Land's End. About two or three in the evening the wind shifted immediately in our teeth; a violent hurricane and tempest suddenly arose; the most dreadful possible of nights and of scenes ensued, the sea breaking everywhere over the ship. We lost the tiller, and the vessel was for some minutes down on her beam-ends; and nothing, I believe, but the undaunted presence of mind, perseverance, experience, and courage of Paget preserved us from a watery grave. The oldest and most experienced of our sailors were petrified and paralyzed: you may judge somewhat, then, of what was the state of most of the passengers: everyone almost flew up in their shirts upon deck in terrors that are not to be described.

"Most affectionately yours,

"G. R."

"Royal George Yacht, Milford Haven, Sept. 10th, 1821.

"My dear Friend,

"So many unexpected circumstances have taken place since I wrote to you, that I scarce know where I am to take up matters to put you *au fait* of everything in all quarters. It is rather a difficult task to undertake, particularly as I know you are not partial to long letters. I will, however, endeavour to do my best, and be as concise as possible.

"My last letter told you I was to embark (as I did) that day at Dunleary. We made since that two efforts to stand out on our homeward voyage, but were driven back by change of wind. However, on Friday last we stood out suddenly upon a change of wind in our favour, and persevered; but we encountered a most formidable tempest for nearly forty-eight hours, such as has been hardly known by the most veteran sailor, and, with the blessing of God, arrived safe in this port about eleven o'clock in the forenoon of yesterday. Not to be prolix, but in order to give you some little idea of our state, most of our fleet were separated, except the Royal Sovereign yacht, the Liffey frigate, and ourselves. The Grecian sloop of war, reckoned one of the best schooners in the service, sprung her mast, and was obliged entirely to part company from us in distress, and to make for the

very first anchorage she could, where it is hoped she is long before this in safety, though as yet no intelligence of her has been received.

"Most even of our crew and company were deadly sick, but the very worst of all was my poor self; and I am now for the first time, since we are again at anchor in smooth water, risen from my bed, and not without considerable exertion and inconvenience to myself. I have suffered so much solely for the purpose of writing to you; for I too gratefully feel the warmth of your affectionate heart towards me at all times, not only not to neglect you, but to prove to you that you are always present to my mind; and I felt quite sure, that if any part of our history of the last week should reach you, that the short note which Francis wrote you yesterday would not in the least answer the purpose of quieting your affectionate anxieties and cares about me. When Francis wrote, it was in the utmost haste to save the post, which leaves here before three in the afternoon, that you might know something decidedly of us, and we had then thoughts of pursuing our return overland, as he acquainted you; but, upon thorough consideration, we found this scheme next to impracticable—what from the very mountainous and bad state of the roads through this part of South Wales, the scarcity of horses, the dreadful length of the stages, and, after all, the formidable length of the journey itself to London (being above two hundred and seventy-two miles), and this, too, unattended with any sort of comfort or accommodation on the road, at any rate until we reached Gloucester. Upon the best calculation, therefore, we could not have reached our destination at earliest till Thursday night. We have therefore determined, all matters considered, to summon up resignation and patience to our aid, to wait the first steady and favourable wind, and which is now very promising, that will carry us round the Land's End in about eight hours; after which we shall make Portsmouth at the very latest twelve hours afterwards, let the wind be then almost whatever it may.

"In addition to this, I must also say that it was quite out of the question my being able, for two or three days at least, to encounter so tedious a journey by land; I am so completely shattered and torn to pieces by the effects and sickness of an eight-and-forty hours' tempest. Up to this moment, then, you are acquainted with everything upon which it is in my power to give you any information by letter. The veriest minutiæ of the details of what has passed since we met, you shall have from me when we meet. Now, then, God bless you!

"Ever yours, etc.,

"G. R."

The following is the diary of the voyage: "On the 8th, Saturday, the wind being unfavourable, the fleet could not proceed, and was obliged to lay to at sea during the night. On the 9th the squadron reached Milford Haven at twelve o'clock. On the 11th the royal squadron sailed from Milford. The gale being strong and contrary, the fleet encountered many dangers incident to boisterous weather. On the 12th it returned to Milford Haven, and his Majesty, after suffering much fatigue during his protracted voyage, determined to land. Milford was illuminated on the 13th, at half-past five. The King landed and commenced his journey to London. He slept at the Priory, the seat of the Marquis of Camden, that night. On the 14th, at four a.m., he set out again on his journey, and breakfasted at Monmouth with the Duke of Beaufort. His Majesty slept that night at Chapel House, Oxfordshire. On the 15th his Majesty arrived at his palace in Pall Mall, at seven o'clock in the evening, attended by Lord Graves, after an absence of forty days, twenty-two of which he spent in Ireland."

Such was this eventful progress, the disappointment at the result being of course in proportion to the rapturous delight exhibited. The display was virtually insincere on both sides, the *épanchement de cœur* evoked being unwarranted. Lord Byron gave vent to his contempt and bitterness at the whole proceeding in the well-known lines, "The Irish Avatar," in which he grossly ridiculed the person and the tastes of the King:

THE IRISH AVATAR.

Ere the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,
And her ashes still float to her home o'er the tide,
Lo! George the triumphant speeds over the wave,
To the long-cherished isle—which he loved like his bride.

But he comes! The Messiah of Royalty comes!
Like a goodly Leviathan roll'd from the waves!
Then receive him as best such an advent becomes,
With a legion of cooks and an army of slaves. . . .

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now?
Were he God—as he is but the commonest clay,
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow—
Such servile devotion might shame him away. . . .

Spread, spread for Vitellius the royal repast,
Till the gluttonous despot be stuffed to the gorge,
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last,
The Fourth of the fools and oppressors called "George."

The wildest hopes were naturally excited, and a passage in his letter to the Lord Lieutenant, ambiguously expressed, seems to

have been construed as a promise of immediate relief for the Catholics. "All classes and descriptions of his Irish subjects have made the deepest impression on his mind, and he looks forward to the period when he shall revisit them with the strongest feeling of satisfaction. His Majesty trusts that, in the meantime, not only the spirit of loyal union, which now so generally exists, will remain unabated and unimpaired, and that every cause of irritation may be avoided and discountenanced, mutual forbearance and goodwill observed and encouraged, and a security be thus afforded for the continuance of that comfort amongst themselves, which is not less essential to his Majesty's happiness than to their own, and which it has been the chief object of his Majesty, during his residence in this country, to cherish and promote." This was no more than a benevolent desire for peace among the opposing factions.

A great deal, however, was built on his studiously courteous reception of the Catholics, who were received in the closet, which caused consternation among many of the old "true blue" order. The impression made on the Duke of Montrose is worth recording. "It is not a little remarkable," he writes to Lord Eldon: "also, the command over themselves which the whole nation have had, from the highest to the lowest. At the theatre, though full of enthusiasm, they had a quietness and a desire to conduct themselves with propriety I never saw before. I have seen no drunkenness, no unregulated marks of affection and loyalty in the city; elsewhere, indeed, they have pressed upon the King to see and to touch him, a little inconveniently, and mixed perhaps with some superstition, as if some good would happen to them in some way or other from having touched the King or his clothes. The manner in which his Majesty has been received has had a great effect on his Majesty's feelings, and requires great tact not to hurry his Majesty into expressions which discretion may lament, or into comparisons more open perhaps than politic; also, perhaps, into grounds of expectation and hope which can hardly be realized." There was sound sense in these forecasts. Within a short time there was disgust on the one side at unfulfilled hope, and on the other a sense that his bourgeois familiarities and graciousness had been ill-repaid.

CHAPTER V.

1821.

In his absence occurred the death of the unfortunate Queen, whose troubled career was no doubt hurried to a close, owing to the recent mortification she had encountered. It had been almost settled that she was to undertake a sort of tour in Scotland—it may be presumed a counter-move to the Irish expedition of her consort. There was, Sir Henry Holland says, a strange sort of irrational bravery in her nature, which made her disregard all common precautions, not merely as to public opinion, but even where personal risk was concerned. An acute internal inflammation had gone on for a couple of days without any attempt at checking it. She went, as we have seen, to the theatre; and it was on an accidental visit of her physician, Dr. Holland, that the first notice was taken of the malady. Bulletins were now regularly issued, but by the end of the week recovery was found to be hopeless. Her faithful friends gathered round her dying bed; Lord and Lady Hood (who, however, were quitting her service, the poor lady having selected a new favourite, the Rev. Mr. Wood, a son of the alderman), Lady Anne Hamilton, Mr. Wilde, Dr. Lushington, and the two counsel, Brougham and Denman — the former quitting the sickbed of his child to come to her. Mr. Denman describes what he saw with much true feeling. She lay on a sofa, a handkerchief round her head, her face flushed, her eyes bright, while she gave instructions for her will. From the first she had but little hope, and indeed was eager to quit the world that had been so troubled for her; and Lord Hood assured Mr. Denman that the speech reported in the newspapers was

often on her lips: "I shall quit life without regret." She was constant and cheerful throughout, even heroic, without being theatrical. On the Tuesday she grew suddenly worse, and towards evening an access of fever coming on, mortification having set in, she with much vehemence of manner and excitement denounced the conspiracies and persecution that had attended her, but presently became calm. Seeing Dr. Holland beside her, she said with a smile: "Well, my dear doctor, what do you think now?" She took leave of her friends, thanking them for their kindness, and in a not undignified fashion passed away about ten o'clock on the night of August 7, 1821. By her will and codicils what fortune she possessed was left to her *protégé* Austin, with remembrances to various friends and dependants. Some debts—indeed £15,000 for her house—she commended to the care of the Government. She desired that she should be interred at Brunswick, and that the inscription, "Here lies Caroline of Brunswick, the injured Queen of England," be put on her coffin. If we can trust the profuse accounts of her conversations, one of her last acts was to declare her forgiveness of Dumont's calumnies. Mr. Wilde, afterwards Lord Chancellor, was with her to the last, and told Mr. Denman that in her delirium the name of Bergami was never mentioned.*

The excitement and grief at Hammersmith during these events was prodigious—expresses passing and repassing, the people crowding at the gates to learn the news. The whole kingdom was profoundly moved. Lord Castlereagh's blunt opinion was, that it was "to be regarded as the greatest of all possible deliverances for his majesty and the country." But though this might be so, her interment was to bring his majesty the most serious trouble and inconvenience.

It was evident that the funeral would be seized on as an opportunity for a public demonstration, which the Government were naturally eager to check. They resolved, therefore, while paying her the honours of a "lying in state," guards of honour, etc., that the body should not be taken through the City proper, but be brought round by devious and private ways. But the various partisans of the Queen, female as well as male, were determined that some capital should be made out of the display. A foolish correspondence was published between the Prime Minister and Lady Hood, the latter demanding that the funeral should be put off till she got her mourning ready—that there should be no guards, but the people should be trusted. On the

* Some Methodists were singing hymns on the river opposite her house, and, as they raised their voices, a violent gust of wind burst open the door of her room. At that moment she expired.

day of the funeral—which was on the day week of her death—the unseemly proceedings began by a wrangle between the executors and the undertakers. Dr. Lushington made formal protest, urging the indecent haste shown, the forcing into the procession a guard. "Touch the body at your peril!" exclaimed the eminent counsel. "You will not use violence?" replied the undertaker, who also had to endure much abuse of the strongest from Mr. Wilde. Both he and the undertaker declared they would use force to carry out their views, but wiser counsels prevailed, and the procession set out at about eight o'clock. It must be said that, under the circumstances, the affair was conducted handsomely. A hearse emblazoned with escutcheons and drawn by eight horses, heralds, twelve mourning coaches, and six squadrons of troopers, made a handsome show. But there was a deluge of rain that never ceased. The arrangements—no doubt due to the dull Lord Sidmouth—were from the starting-point carried out with a mixture of obstinacy and weakness that led to disastrous results. It had been determined that at Kensington the procession should turn off the main-road, ascending the steep Church Street, and so gain the Bayswater Road. But on arriving at this point, it was found that an enormous barricade of overturned waggons, etc., had been formed, which was literally impassable. The procession halted, while messengers were despatched for instructions to the Prime Minister. Towards eleven there arrived a Bow Street magistrate at the head of a troop of Life Guards, and who decided that it was impossible to force the obstruction. Amid yells of triumph from the mob, the word was given to move on to the gate next to Knightsbridge Barracks, where it was proposed to cross the Park. Here it became evident that the passionate excitement of the mob would lead to mischief, for they clung to the gates and refused to let them be opened. Again the authorities had to yield, and the crowd, flying on before, were found to have formed a fresh obstruction at Park Lane, where the next passage upwards was to be attempted. The officers in command, as well as the magistrate, had received the most imperative instructions not to go through the City, and were determined, or rather were obliged, to carry them out at all costs. The only resource appeared to be to open the Park gates and make for the gate where the Marble Arch now stands. Thus foiled, the crowd made for the gate, which they closed, and threw up a barricade in the direction of the Edgeware Road, along which the procession was to be taken. The railings were torn down and converted into pikes; the soldiers were attacked furiously with brickbats and stones, and, showing much good temper, were at last obliged to fire, killing

two persons and wounding several others. On this the mob fell back sullenly, but, as will be seen, were not beaten. For his share in this transaction Sir Robert Wilson, having remonstrated with the officers in command in unbecoming language, was dismissed from the army. No doubt this was a severe step, but not more than was warranted by his behaviour. Even after the collision, Lord Liverpool, who directed all the proceedings, sent repeated instructions to the magistrate to carry out the original programme, which the military all through persisted could have been done, but after the bloodshed at the Park, those in charge did not wish to risk another collision. The reason they were so eager not to pass through the City, was the foolish idea that the body would be seized and detained there in consequence of the executors' protests against the "indecent haste" exhibited. It is curious to find that they were also afraid the Lord Mayor would not admit the military. The procession, having made its way to Tottenham Court Road, had succeeded thus far in carrying out their programme—though indeed it was a strange funeral progress, marked at every step by violence, ill-will, stones, and bloodshed. Here there was found another enormous barricade. Attempts were made to turn the obstacle, but the result was that the procession was driven down to Drury Lane, and presently forced to enter the City at Temple Bar. The people having thus gained the victory, the body was taken triumphantly through the City, being met by the Lord Mayor and authorities.

It took a couple of days to get to Harwich, where on the embarkation there was a fresh unbecoming scene, though not an actual disturbance. At Colchester an altercation took place in the church as to screwing on the plate with the inscription, "Injured Queen of England," which the undertaker objected to, but which Dr. Lushington insisted on. The entrance into Harwich is described by the Queen's friends as offering a most degrading spectacle: "The undertaker leading on a lame horse, ten of his assistants following in pairs—a miserable spectacle, both as to cattle and dress: some with shoes, some with gaiters, some in spurs, others not." Unfortunately there is always something mean even in the most pretentious of these ceremonials—nothing is more degrading than the "behind the scenes" of these things. But it does not appear that the rites that attended the hapless Caroline to her grave were worse than others. The coffin was put on board a man-of-war, but it was then seen that another plate and inscription had been substituted. On the 24th of August it reached Brunswick, and was there interred with due state and ceremony at nightfall.

The whole obstructive attitude of the executors was indeed

unreasonable, and justified Lord Sidmouth in describing it as factious. Their particular grievance was the "indecent haste" with which within a week the obsequies were pressed on, and the mode in which the direction was assumed by Government. But the case of the Government was unanswerable. The time, within three days, had been actually fixed by the Queen herself in her will. The Government was defraying all expenses, and the King, as her husband, had the undoubted right of making what arrangements he thought fit. Even all these were to be subservient to the public peace. That the charges of wishing to perform the ceremonies meanly, and of wishing to give her maimed rites were unfounded, is shown by the order of the programme.

The Government was much troubled by these untoward events. It is amusing to find Lord Sidmouth, who was attending the King in Dublin, advising "that the tables should be turned, and we must become the accusers of the complainants, instead of suffering the complainants to be the accusers." Otherwise he is convinced "the Government will suffer severely in estimation and character." The police magistrate was dismissed. A contrast was the behaviour of Lord Liverpool, who wrote eagerly to Dublin to propose a general mourning, which he said would gracefully wind up the unhappy business. But the King would not agree to this. He was displeased, too, at the body not being embarked in the river, but the Admiralty had objected. Lord Liverpool again pressed that the mourning should be general, and pronounced three weeks too short; but the King declined to alter his resolution.

CHAPTER VI.

1821—1822.

In this year also the King set off to visit Hanover. Sir William Knighton attended his majesty, and wrote to his own family reports of his progress. They got to Brussels on Thursday the 28th of September. "The Duke of Wellington and Lords Londonderry and Clancarty were in waiting to receive us. In about half an hour after our arrival the King of the Netherlands, the Prince of Orange, and Prince Frederick paid their respects to his majesty. We were all introduced. We then sat down to dinner, amounting to twenty-eight persons. I had one of my bad headaches; but I am now quite well. The truth is, I have so much to do I am almost worked to death. Sir B. precedes us. My King, God bless him! never gives me a moment. The pen is never out of my hand by day, and it is his wish that I sleep in his dressing-room at night; so that he has access to me at all hours. You will not, therefore, be surprised that you do not get long letters from me."

On Monday the 1st of October he writes: "This has been a busy and an interesting day. Early this morning we quitted Brussels for this place. We reached the little village of Waterloo about twelve o'clock, accompanied by Prince Frederick of Holland, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Clancarty, and a number of persons of minor distinction. The King went into the little church of the village, examined all the tablets of inscription upon the walls, then visited the willow-tree under which was buried the shattered limb of Lord Anglesey, and seemed greatly impressed with all around him. The day was very unfavourable—it rained torrents; but, notwithstanding this, the King went to

the plain of Waterloo, accompanied by the duke, and examined every part of the various positions." This seems to have left a vivid impression on the King's mind. He often used to describe the ground and the battle, as it had been explained to him, and after libations of his favourite liqueurs, would delude himself that he had actively taken part in the operations of the glorious day.* At Dusseldorf "the whole garrison marched out by torchlight to serenade the King on his arrival. The effect was beautiful: I never heard such bands. The style in which they played 'God save the King' was enough to electrify one. I get but little sleep. I am, however (thanks be to the Almighty!), quite well. You may judge what I have to do. Sir B. is at Hanover, or nearly so, by this time. Our suite consists of nearly forty horses, besides the escort; and all this moves without the slightest confusion. I have now two large Prussian grenadiers at my bedroom door."

On Saturday the 6th of October they were at Osnaburg, where he was received with great rejoicings, illuminations, reviews, and even tears. Sir William tells us it was some sixty years since the loyal Hanoverians had seen their King. On the 10th he made his grand entry into Hanover on horseback. Then followed levees and drawing-rooms. There were battues and other festivities, a hasty coronation, but the natural result of these pleasures soon declared itself.

"Here I am, full of anxiety and wretchedness," writes the Court physician on the 4th of October. "The King has got a most severe and uncomfortable fit of the gout. This attack commenced two days since. I still entertain hopes that I shall be so far able to get it under that we may begin our journey on Thursday week. This will be two days later than I expected; but still I hope to save this by the route we intend to take. I have had an anxious time of it, I can assure you; but I do not regret it."

He soon got better, and Monday the 29th was able to set off for home. At Gottingen there was a tournament, and an address from the University of so feeling a character that "the King burst into tears." At a civic ball, however, he was in great spirits, dancing a polonaise with the wife of Herr Von Schimmelpennick and waltzing with the burgomaster's daughters. Notwithstanding, Mr. Fremantle reported that his Majesty returned "bored with the Germans and disgusted with his Hanoverians, and that his fit of the gout was but a pretext to get rid of them."

* On one occasion, boasting that he had led his own regiment down a great hill, he earnestly appealed to the Duke of Wellington as to his recollections of the feat. The reply was: "Very steep, your majesty."

It was noted that since his dangerous voyage from Ireland, his majesty had shown signs of a new-born religious feeling. On his way to London from Milford after the storm he had met Lord and Lady Harcourt. He got out of his carriage and sat with them in theirs, on the public highway, recounting all his perils at sea. The lady, as she told her friends, was quite edified at his pious acknowledgments of his escape, and there was quite a change to be noticed in his conduct. His physician, too, writing on the German expedition, notes various occasions on which service was performed. Connected with this feeling is an amusingly scrupulous letter on the appointment of an Irish Archbishop:

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Most secret and confidential.]

"Carlton House, Thursday night, 12.30, May 16th, 1822.

"Dear Lord Liverpool,

"I have been thinking very seriously on the subject relative to the Primate of Ireland, and I cannot make up my mind that either you or the Lord Lieutenant are right in the conclusion which you both seem disposed to come to as to the individual to be exalted to that sacred station.

"I am too far advanced in life not to give subjects of this description the most serious and attentive consideration. It is, alas! but too true that policy is too often obliged to interfere with our best intentions; but I do think, where the head of the Church is concerned, especially at such a moment, we ought alone to be influenced by religious duty. Do not be surprised at this scrupulous language, for I am quite sincere. I think that you would do well to inquire of the Archbishop of Canterbury if no English bishop on the bench can be found fitting and suitable for such an important trust; and if not, if no dignitary of the Church in this country can be selected for that purpose (for you will remember that Dr. Howley was most justly at once made Bishop of London); let us have piety and learning if possible. Besides, I do not like, I cannot reconcile myself to have the primacy of Ireland filled by an Irishman, for let us not forget the particular circumstances in which we are at present placed. I have no confidence in Lord Wellesley's opinion upon this subject. I shall say no more, but I desire you to give this your deliberate consideration.

"Believe me your sincere friend,

"G. R."

It is to be also noted that effusive declarations of the Irish voyage now often suggested themselves as requiring some fulfilment, and it was significant that Sir M. Tierney went about declaring that it was an injustice to the King that the claims of the Catholics should be refused. The King was also out of humour with his ministers as to baronetcies, and on his desire to make Lord Conyngham Master of the Horse, the ministry objected, on which "a violent quarrel" took place.

The King, who had visited Ireland and Hanover, now felt that he must confer a similar honour on an important portion of his dominions. Indeed, the Scotch had already expressed some jealous dissatisfaction at the preference given to another portion of the kingdom, and the Sovereign—who was now, and not unnaturally, beginning to fancy himself the "idol of his people"—was eager to receive fresh instalments of the welcoming acclamations of his subjects. A visit to Edinburgh was therefore settled upon.

That nation, with a more wealthy middle class, and a more magnificent nobility, far exceeded the Irish in the splendour of their preparations for his reception. The whole kingdom became alive with preparations, for which some antique remnants of chivalric customs, newly kindled by the enthusiasm of Walter Scott, were admirably adapted, in the view of scenic effect. The preparations were of the most elaborate character—new roads were made, old and ugly buildings thrown down, painting and decorations set on foot, while for the Lord Provost a magnificent equipage or coach, with six horses, was got ready; costumes and fancy uniforms, imaginatively accepted as connected with old days of chivalry, were devised; Celtic guards, etc.; while Sir Walter Scott wrote ballads to kindle the enthusiasm.*

* CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME!

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

Being new Words to an auld Spring.

The news has flown frae mouth to mouth,
The North for ance has bang'd the South;
The deil a Scotman's die o' drouth,
Carle, now the King's come!

CHORUS.

Carle, now the King's come!
Carle, now the King's come!
Thou shalt dance, and I will sing,
Carle, now the King's come!

And so on for nearly forty stanzas.

His majesty embarked at Gravesend on Saturday August 10, 1822, amid tumultuous exclamations of joy and loyalty. The royal yachts, the Lord Mayor's barge, and a fleet of attendant boats, were all moored off the hospital, and formed a scene of extraordinary brilliancy and colour. The Royal George and the Royal Sovereign were to take him down the river, while a squadron of war vessels awaited him at the open sea.*

The King embarking, as was latterly his wont, with a benediction—"God bless you all!"—retired to his cabin to change his dress, and presently appeared on the deck in full naval uniform, and "wearing a cocked hat." His yacht was taken in tow by a steam-tug, and he set off amid extraordinary excitement. Not till Wednesday did the vessels reach Leith.† As soon as it was descried all Edinburgh poured out to line the hills and try and get a glimpse of the visitor; but the King determined not to land until the following morning. Visitors however arrived, among them Sir W. Scott, whom he greeted with, "The man in Scotland I most wished to see. Let him come up." As on the Irish visit, whisky celebrated the arrival, and his majesty called for some prime Glenlivat, in which he made Sir Walter pledge him.‡ The latter was the bearer of a badge or decoration, made to the order of the ladies of Edinburgh, and which he promised

* The modest accommodation of a royal yacht in those days offers a contrast to what is required now. "The quarter-deck of this royal yacht scarcely exceeded, in decoration that of one of our crack frigates. The King's dining-cabin is a room about twenty-three feet wide and full seventeen feet deep. A door, opposite to that by which we had entered, conducted us through a passage about three feet and a half wide, and seven feet and a half long, to the King's state-cabin, or drawing-room, which we supposed to be about twenty feet wide and fifteen or sixteen deep. To the left of the passage, entered by a door from the state-cabin, was the King's bedchamber, measuring about thirteen feet one way and the length of the passage the other. The ceiling was about six feet and a half from the deck, and the royal apartments, though richly and tastefully fitted up, did not appear to contain a single superfluous piece of furniture. In the two bookcases of the state-cabin were several standard works. The Royal George, we understand, measures three hundred and thirty tons, and was built in 1817, at Deptford dockyard, from a design by Sir Henry Peake, one of the surveyors of the navy. The King's trip to Ireland last year, it seems, afforded indubitable proofs of the superiority of her construction. In the two days' gale which his majesty experienced on his return, the yacht shipped scarcely any water; while the attendant frigates were 'plunging bows and bowsprits under.'"

† One of the *avant-couriers* was the inevitable Sir William Curtis, in his yacht, Die jonge Vrow Rebecca Maria.

‡ The enthusiastic poet, who was in a sort of rapture the whole time, begged for the glass, and put it in his pocket; but on his return found his brother-poet Crabbe waiting, and in his excitement forgot the precious relic, and sat down upon it, crushing it to pieces.

to wear. A bottle of wine was graciously thrown into another vessel, in which his Majesty's health was drunk: a guinea was offered for the empty bottle, and refused. Two noblemen begged to be allowed to keep the glasses which the King had handed to them.

Sir William Knighton gives this little account of the scene: "Yesterday was the day of our arrival. The weather continued wet, stormy, and uncomfortable during the whole night at Leith Roads; the yacht at anchor had an uncomfortable motion. I saw, for the first time, Walter Scott, who came on board immediately on our coming to anchor. He has no trace in his countenance of such superior genius and softness of mind as the beauty of his writings displays; but the moment he speaks you discover a correctness of understanding and a display of intellect marked by the utmost accuracy of thought. Speaking of the incessant rain, he said in his Scotch phraseology: 'All I can say is, I am perfectly ashamed of it.' The King then desired him to take a glass of cherry brandy, which he graciously handed to him himself. Walter Scott, when he had drunk it, craved a great favour from his majesty, that he might be permitted to put the glass in his pocket to keep it as a relic, to his feelings above all value. The King's landing yesterday was most impressive and magnificent. By all accounts, more than a million of people had collected together on the occasion."

On the following day the King entered Edinburgh, being met by a magnificent procession, in which all the old offices of honour were represented, and to set off which picturesque, if fanciful, dresses were devised. There was the Lord Lyon with a crown on, White Rod, Celtic guards, while his majesty himself appeared in his admiral's uniform. "He was heard to declare that the Scotch were a nation of gentlemen." At the close of the proceedings he arrived at Holyrood, where the old regalia of Scotland were offered by the "Knight Marischal;" then a pair of "barbed arrows" were presented on behalf of the "Royal Archers," who had dresses for the occasion. The day was finished at Dalkeith Palace, where the young Duke of Buccleuch—then about sixteen years old—received the King, who, however, brought his own cooks and household.

Then followed levees and drawing-rooms of extraordinary magnificence. His majesty appeared in a suit of Stuart tartan, though he was not a little annoyed at the *gaucherie* of his admirer, Sir W. Curtis, who was arrayed in a suit of the same material and clan, and from his bulk seemed a sort of parody of his august patron. At the drawing-room the King appeared as a field-marshal. Then followed a performance at the theatre of "Rob

Roy," and a banquet, at which he was observed to partake of turtle and grouse soups, stewed carp, and venison, in the first course, and in the second, of grouse and apricot tart. He drank moselle, champagne, and claret.

He made a characteristic speech, in the delivery of which "the voice of his majesty was evidently affected by his feelings. There was a blandness in it, a pathos, which, more than even the words, spoke to the heart of everyone present. Throughout his majesty's utterance was most distinct; but, as he proceeded, there was an increase of energy; and, in concluding, he placed his hand upon his heart, and expressed himself with powerful emphasis." During the loyal songs, he not only beat time to the chorus, but "accompanied it with his voice." A more edifying spectacle was his visit to church of a Sunday morning. It was noted that "he lifted a psalm-book, and stood during the reading." *

The music and dancing seemed to give him great enjoyment, which he signified by "looking up at the band and snapping his fingers." The celebrated Gow orchestra, which performed at Almack's, was here, and his majesty used pleasantly to despatch his young host on errands to the *chef d'orchestre,* "with the benevolent view of disengaging him from the more arduous duties of the table. 'Come, Buccleuch,' said his majesty, slapping him on the shoulder, 'you are the youngest man in the company, and must make yourself useful.' A glass of liqueur having been offered to the young duke immediately after dinner, the King observed it, and said with a gracious smile: 'No! no! it is too strong for his grace to drink.' After dinner his majesty rose from his seat, and, advancing close to the band, graciously condescended to address Mr. Gow for the space of several minutes. Among other flattering remarks, he observed: 'From my earliest years I have always been fond of Scottish music, and have often listened to it with pleasure, but have never had so great a treat as this evening. I am happy to see the representative of Neil Gow in this place; and long may he live to delight his friends!' Gow

* "The spectacle of a monarch proceeding to humble himself in adoration before the King of Kings could scarcely fail with a rational people to act as an example—as an incentive to devotion, rather than as the signal of clamorous rejoicing. When the royal carriage was near to the Cross, a few boys took off their hats, as if about to cheer his Majesty; but some old men dissuasively held up their hands, and the most prompt obedience was yielded to the signal. This circumstance was much noticed by the King, who turned round, seemingly pleased, and made some observation respecting it to his attendants. Indeed, we have reason to believe that there was no part of the behaviour of his Scottish subjects which was more admired by his majesty than their conduct on this solemn occasion."

was quite confounded with such a marked proof of the royal regard—his heart swelled, and his lips faltered; but, sensible that some acknowledgment was due, which, if not courteous, ought at least to be emphatic, he made an effort to ejaculate the words: 'God Almighty bless your Majesty!' which fell upon the royal ear in indistinct murmurs. When the King had withdrawn, Gow in some degree recovered his composure, and was heard to utter: 'I'm perfectly contented to die now!'"

On the 29th of August the King took his departure. His last words on quitting Dalkeith being his favourite benediction, "God bless you all!" *

* One of those fantastic exhibitions which he delighted in and encouraged, attended his departure. "In Ireland last year he was visited by a poor diminutive Irish cripple of the name of O'Brien, who came from the south coast in a miniature cutter of his own constructing, not more than four feet in length, and in which (his legs and the greater part of his body being curiously stowed under the deck) he encountered rather a stormy sea in coasting along into Dublin Bay. He got safely alongside the royal yacht, however, and appeared in his tiny bark before his majesty, who, pleased with the novel effort of the dwarfish and adventurous sailor, gave orders that ten sovereigns, with a plentiful supply of provisions, should be presented to him. The completion of this spirited expedition justly entitled the obscure navigator to preferment, and he was promoted by the sailors to the rank of commodore, by which title he has been familiarly distinguished ever since. On the occasion of his Majesty's recent visit to Scotland, O'Brien deemed it proper to repeat his demonstrations of loyalty and attachment; and for this purpose he shipped himself and his craft to Scotland, but it was upset and lost, and the King kindly ordered a new one for him."

CHAPTER VII.

1822—1824.

But while he was engaged in his junketing to Scotland a very serious event had occurred. This was the death of Lord Londonderry.* It was curious that while he was in Ireland he should have lost his Queen, and while in Scotland his minister. Naturally this death threatened serious annoyance for the King. He, as his ministers also, felt that Mr. Canning alone must fill the vacancy. Lord Liverpool suggested that the matter should stand over till the Scotch progress should be concluded. Lord Liverpool was probably not sorry that the occupations of a different kind to which his majesty was pledged for the next week or two would give him time gradually to accustom his mind to the contemplation of what he himself must have seen to be so desirable as to be almost unavoidable; and therefore in his

* On leaving the King, a gentleman (Sir J. Beckett) said to him carelessly: "So you purpose leaving us for the Congress?" "Purpose!" was the answer; "so you are in the conspiracy against me, to prevent me going?" The other was confounded, and knew not what to answer. But to the Duke of Wellington his behaviour was more strange. He had noticed, he said, his silence and depression. "Just," he continues in his memorandum, "as he was starting for the Netherlands at four o'clock, he took me into his house to talk to me about the same story that he told to you and to Lord Liverpool; and, strange to say, he imagined from my manner at the last Cabinet, and afterwards walking home with him, that I had heard something against him, and believed it. He thought the same of the Duke of York. And he told me some strange story of a man telling him this day that his horses were waiting for him when he was coming out of Carlton House . . . . as a proof that the person who had ordered up his horses thought there was so much against him that he

first communication proposed to postpone all discussions on the subject till the King should return to London. The King's reply approved the delay.

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Private.]

"Royal George Yacht, Leith Roads,
"August 15, 1822.

"Dear Lord Liverpool,

"I cannot express the painful grief which I feel at your melancholy communication; melancholy indeed, both for myself and others who knew the inestimable value of this superior and excellent person.

"The ways of Providence are so inscrutable to us poor blind creatures that, on occasions of this description the agony of one's mind is lost in amazement. You, my lord, will not be surprised that I should feel this. I think you have judged rightly in not coming, and I quite approve that no arrangements should be thought of till my return to town.

"Your sincere friend,
"George R.

"P.S.—I write one word more, to desire that you will favour no intentions respecting the blue ribbon."

But, as Mr. Yonge says, a couple of days afterwards he followed up his first letter by a second, showing a curious desire to elude the proposal which he foresaw must be made to him, by getting Canning, if possible, out of the way before it could be mentioned.

ought to fly the country. He then rang the bell to ask about his horses." He then cried excessively. The Duke adds: "I fear he has mentioned this story to more." The Duke at once sent to Dr. Bankhead, Lord Londonderry's medical adviser, who went to him, cupped him, and succeeded in getting him down to his country place, also going himself. He tells the tragedy that followed. About seven o'clock on the Monday morning the maid called to him, saying Lord Londonderry wished to see him. He found him in his dressing-room, standing opposite the window, with his face to the ceiling. The doctor ran towards him, saying: "My dear lord, why do you stand so?" Upon which, without turning, he answered: "Bankhead, let me fall upon your arm; it is all over." In the agony of the moment Dr. Bankhead caught him on his arm, and, dreadful to relate, saw a short-bladed knife in his right hand, fiercely clenched, with which he had deeply divided the carotid artery. And from the sudden effusion of blood he instantly fell from Bankhead's arms on his face upon the floor, and was instantly dead without a struggle.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"[Most private.]

"Dalkeith Palace, August 17th, 1822.

"Dear Lord Liverpool,

"Notwithstanding the hurry and agitated confusion in which I am necessarily kept, yet, as you may suppose, I cannot help considering very deeply the distress and embarrassment in which my Government must be placed by the death of my esteemed and valued friend Lord Londonderry.

"The immediate object of my writing to you this letter is not to make any proposal at present with a view of supplying the lamentable void produced by the untimely death of this excellent statesman, but to desire that you will not interrupt, and on no account impede the arrangements which are already settled respecting India, as it is my decision that they should remain final and unalterable.

"I am induced to say thus much to you for the purpose of guarding you against any new negotiations with the individual in question.

"Believe me, your sincere friend always,

"G. R."

MR. PEEL TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Most private.]

"Edinburgh, August 20th, 1822.

"Dear Lord Liverpool,

"I think it right, at least it will be a satisfaction to my mind, to mention to you something which passed with the King yesterday.

"On going into the closet to him before the addresses were presented, he said to me: 'I will now tell you what I purposely postponed telling you until forty-eight hours after I had done it, that I have written to Lord Liverpool informing him that it is my decided intention that all the arrangements with respect to India should remain as they were settled before Lord Londonderry's death, and that there should be no delay in completing them.' The King added: 'I hope you think I have done right.' I replied that I was sensible of his kindness in not having previously mentioned his intention to write to you, and that I hoped he would excuse me if I declined giving any opinion upon the subject of his letter to you, or saying a word upon any point connected with it.

"Believe me, dear Lord Liverpool, yours most truly,

"Robert Peel."

THE KING TO LORD ELDON.

"Royal George Yacht, Leith Roads,
"August 15th, ½ pt. 8 P.M., 1822.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have this moment heard from Liverpool of the melancholy death of his and my dear friend, poor Londonderry. On Friday was the last time I saw him: my own mind was then filled with apprehensions respecting him, and they have, alas! been but too painfully verified. My great object, my good friend, in writing to you to-night, is to tell you that I have written to Liverpool, and I do implore of you not to lend yourself to any arrangement whatever, until my return to town. This, indeed, is Lord Liverpool's own proposal; and, as you may suppose, I have joined most cordially in the proposition. It will require the most prudent foresight on my part relative to the new arrangements that must now necessarily take place. You may easily judge of the state of my mind. Ever believe me,

"Your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

It will thus be seen that the King fancied that this transparent artifice, this affected eagerness that the arrangements of the late Secretary should be carried out, would escape observation.

When the King returned to town, however, a very serious struggle began, and he showed that he was determined to resist the introduction into his Cabinet of the person he so disliked. The Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington, who was at this time ill, and the Cabinet generally, with the exception of the Chancellor, felt that there was no other course to be taken. They were, moreover, aided by the *camarilla* influence. It was lamentable to find the King invariably taking issue on matters where resistance was perfectly idle; but there are weak minds which are deluded into supposing that such a struggle in which they are worsted is a victory instead of a humiliation. He had some reliance on the Duke of Wellington, to whom he despatched Sir W. Knighton for advice and consultation; "the gentleman," the Duke says, "whom the King had been so kind as to send to him." To him he gave the most substantial and sensible reasons for submission, based on Canning's talents, and his opinions being in the main the same as those of the Government. As to the Chancellor's objections, if Canning had spoken harshly of him, so had he of Canning. As to the King's "feelings," the Duke addressed his Majesty in this bold and manly strain: "Then your Majesty's feelings. Your Majesty conceives that Mr.

Canning has offended you, and that your Majesty's honour requires that you should resent this offence. If it were a case between two individuals, they should lay aside their private feelings for the good of the public. But when it came to be a point between the King and one of his subjects, then the honour of your Majesty consists in acts of grace and mercy, and I am convinced that your Majesty's honour is most safe in extending your grace and favour to Mr. Canning."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Carlton House, September 5, 1822.

"My dear Friend,

"I was very glad to learn by the friend whom I sent to your bedside yesterday, that you were rather better, and I hope that I shall have your further amendment confirmed by him to-day.

"He gave me a most faithful and detailed account of your opinion and kind feelings under the painful embarrassment in which we are at present placed; and I must confess that it has produced a stronger conviction on my mind than anything that has been previously urged by others. If I could get over that which is so intimately connected with my private honour, all might be well; but how, my friend, is that to be effected? I have a perfect reliance in your dutiful affection towards me as your Sovereign; I have the most unbounded confidence in your sentiments of regard towards me as your friend; my reliance therefore in you is complete. I am with great truth,

"Your affectionate,

"G. R."

THE SAME.

"Carlton House, September 7, 1822.

"My dear Friend,

"If you are quite well enough to come out to-day, of course I shall be most anxious to see you; but let me desire of you in the strongest manner not to leave your room at any hazard.

"I have written to Lord Liverpool to say I shall defer my interview with him until I shall have had the pleasure of seeing you. My friend, whom I again send with this, will receive from you, in the interim, any new sentiments or opinions that further reflection may have induced you to form on the painful subject under consideration. I am most sensibly impressed with your

dutiful and affectionate attention to my interests and happiness. Believe me, with great truth,

"Your affectionate,
"G. R."

The Chancellor, whose clinging to office seemed to delude him into the most extraordinary compromises, had talked of resigning. He now, however, found himself alone in the Cabinet in his opposition. His explanation of his situation to the Duke of Wellington is truly amusing, and it is needless to say the episode is lightly touched in Mr. Twiss's biography. "I saw the King," he writes to the Duke, "this morning (September 8), and he was inclined to tell me what he was about to tell Lord Liverpool, and to ask my advice. I stated that it was not proper for me to give advice on a thing that I did not concur in. I could not induce myself to act according to the advice you gave me this morning. In truth, I know not how any person who has seen the King in the distress in which I have seen him during this week, and has heard what has fallen from his lips during this week, could in any way further this measure." At the same time he owns that the Duke's words "had led to some improvement in my own conduct." He would like to see him again!

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Private.]

"Carlton House, September 8, 1822.

"Dear Lord Liverpool,

"I send you the enclosed note; by this you will see that I have sacrificed my private feelings, as you and other members of the Cabinet have represented to me that it is what you consider to be for the good of the public service. I have on every occasion, as in this instance, shown my regard and sincerity towards my Government, and I therefore look with confidence to a similar return. This is the greatest sacrifice of my opinions and feelings that I have ever made in my life.

"Believe me, your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

THE SAME.

"Carlton House, September 8, 1822.

"The King has given the fullest consideration to the proposition submitted by Lord Liverpool relative to the admission of Mr. Canning into the King's Government.

"The King has always been justly impressed with the value

of Mr. Canning's talents, and the King had taught himself to believe that such talents might and ought to have been exercised for the benefit of his Sovereign and his country.

"When Mr. Canning thought proper to tender his resignation to the King, and to retire from the King's councils, the King expressed to Mr. Canning his regret that the country was to be deprived of his services.

"It was at this period of time that the King had reason to view with surprise the line of conduct which Mr. Canning then, and afterwards, thought proper to adopt.

"The King forbears to enter into details; the King is aware that the brightest ornament of his crown is the power of extending grace and favour to a subject who may have incurred his displeasure.

"The King therefore permits Lord Liverpool to propose Mr. Canning's readmission into the Government, and the King desires that the communication may be made to Mr. Canning by the transmission of this note.

"G. R."

LORD LIVERPOOL TO THE KING.

"[Private.]

"Coombe Wood, September 8, 1822.

"Lord Liverpool has this moment had the honour of receiving your Majesty's letter, and he feels himself quite overcome with the generosity and goodness manifested by your Majesty, in the sacrifice which your Majesty has condescended to make of your personal feelings, to the consideration of what has been humbly represented to your Majesty by so many of your confidential servants, as the advantage of the public service.

"Your Majesty may most fully rely upon the deep impression which this act of confidence and kindness of your Majesty cannot fail to make upon the minds of Lord Liverpool and of all those with whom your Majesty has been graciously pleased to communicate upon this most trying occasion.

"Lord Liverpool will, in obedience to your Majesty's commands, communicate to Mr. Canning your Majesty's letter, by which your Majesty has been graciously pleased to consent to his admission into your Majesty's service."

Lord Liverpool was "quite overcome by the generosity and goodness" of his Majesty. But it is curious to find that not until three days later, and after an interview, did he communicate the King's letter to Canning;* while the latter did not send his

* Lord Liverpool's doubts in sending the King's letter are shown in his own to Canning. He urged on him "that after the severe calamity

reply to his Majesty for yet two more days. The King's letter is dated September 8th, and Canning's reply the 13th. The meaning of this delay in Mr. Canning's case arose not, as Mr. Yonge supposes, from a disinclination to resign his Indian appointment, but from indignation. He took particular offence at the words "grace and favour," as did also his wife, and he wrote an angry reply to Lord Liverpool, which he intended should be shown to the King. However, Mr. Charles Ellis and Lord Granville, on hearing of this, hurried to him, and by the most earnest arguments succeeded in dissuading him from sending the document.

MR. CANNING TO THE KING.

"Gloucester Lodge, September 13th, 1822.

"Mr. Canning apprehends that it might be considered as disrespectful to the King to omit taking notice of the letter from his Majesty to Lord Liverpool, which Lord Liverpool was specially directed to transmit to Mr. Canning.

"Mr. Canning therefore acknowledges, with all thankfulness and humility, the King's spontaneous signification of his Majesty's 'grace and favour,' and he is particularly grateful for his Majesty's great condescension in specifying the precise period of time at which Mr. Canning had the misfortune to 'to incur his Majesty's displeasure,' as he is confident that, if he were not restrained by his Majesty's declared wish from entering into details, he could make it clear that in the transactions of that period he had not the remotest intention of giving any offence to his Majesty.

"Mr. Canning has only further to express his humble acknowledgments to his Majesty for the confidence so generously manifested in the very nature of the proposal which his Majesty has authorised Lord Liverpool to make to him, a confidence which it will be Mr. Canning's earnest and constant endeavour to deserve."

There is something ironical in the quotation of the words

which the King and the country have sustained, and under all circumstances of the present crisis, a sense of public duty must preclude you from making any difficulty as to taking your part in the councils of the King's Government at home at this time. I know enough of his Majesty's disposition and magnanimity to be satisfied that, however his feelings may have been wounded by some past occurrences, the causes of which have now gone by, he would never have consented to admit you, or anyone, into his councils, unless he had determined to afford to the individual the fullest confidence that might be necessary for the discharge of the important duties of the high and arduous situation which he might be called upon to fill."

'grace and favour,' and the affected gratitude. The King, however, does not appear to have been informed of the real reason for the delay, which he was surprised at.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Carlton House, 4 P.M., September 13th, 1822.

"My dear Friend,

"I am glad to find, by my friend, that you are better to-day; and I hope and trust that the indisposition is nearly over.

"Lord Liverpool has just been with me, and the affair respecting Canning may be considered as concluded. The reason given for the delay was what you kindly sent to me this morning; viz.—the sentiment expressed in my letter, which either you or I should have settled in five minutes. I was glad to find there was no other crotchet or proposition behind. This ends the last calamity. My reliance is on you, my friend; be watchful therefore. God bless you.

"Your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

It always seemed a little mysterious why the King, after so indulgently condoning Mr. Canning's behaviour on the Queen's trial, should have taken offence at his conduct in the later proceedings connected with it. Mr. Greville, who is generally well informed, heard from an intimate friend of Canning's that the resentment was owing to the payments for the Milan Commission, which Lord Londonderry promised should be charged to the State, but which Canning insisted should be defrayed by the King himself. But there was another and better reason to be stated presently.

All being thus happily composed, an interview with the King followed, of which Mr. Canning says coldly: "I have reason to be contented with the King's behaviour at our first interview; and I have learned from good authority that his Majesty professed to have been 'pleased and satisfied' with mine." It is amusing to hear the King's account. He told Madame de Lieven "that having consented to receive him, he behaved, as he always did, in the most gentlemanlike manner he could, and that on delivering the seals to him, he said to him that he had been advised by his ministers that his abilities and eloquence rendered him the only fit man to succeed to the vacancy which Lord Londonderry's death had made, and that in appointing him he had only to desire that he would follow in the steps of his predecessors." There was something clever in this speech. By-and-by it will be seen how this step was for the King's good, and how this admirable foreign

minister was to raise his country to a high position abroad, by his fearless resolute conduct in his dealings with the representatives of other countries.

Lord Liverpool had written on the subject of sending Lord W. Bentinck to India, and on some other political steps. He received this reply:

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Private.]

"Keeper's Lodge, October 8th, 1822.

"Dear Lord Liverpool,

"I coincide completely with you in the opinion that it would be highly unadvisable that Lord William Bentinck should be the successor of Lord Hastings.

"With respect to the other suggestions you have offered me for my consideration, I must fairly acknowledge to you that I think they are all attended with more or less difficulty, and any one of them in the abstract likely, if not certain, of being followed by serious inconvenience in the result.

"I can have no hesitation in stating as my opinion, that the present Speaker would be a very proper person to go to India. As to Mr. Wynne, if he is deemed the properest person to fill the vacancy in the chair of the House of Commons, and supposing him to attain it, I am decidedly of opinion that he and all his connections (taking into view the two very highest and most marked favours which I have conferred within the short space of two years upon the Duke of Buckingham) ought to be content; and that if they are not so in consequence, nothing that ever I can do, or my Government ever can or may do, will satisfy their immeasurable pretensions.

"With regard to the admission of the Duke of Buckingham into the Cabinet, I am certain that, independent of any other objection to which it is so palpably open, it would be one of the most unpopular measures that the Government could have recourse to; and here I must candidly state to you an opinion which I have long entertained, that my Cabinet (from a variety of circumstances) has become by far too numerous; and at the same time that I do admit, that in the present instance (were it to take place) this would not be increasing the number of those who compose the Cabinet at present, still I think you ought well to consider, upon any vacancy occurring in several of those offices which have lately been made Cabinet situations, before you suffer them to be filled up with the like important trust being attached to them.

"Your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

THE SAME.

"[Private.]

"Royal Lodge, Windsor Park, October 9th, 1822.

"DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

"I hope you will find that I have not delayed the return of the messenger very long.

"I shall certainly not object to the nomination of Lord Amherst to the station of Governor-General in India, if he be the individual that is the most desired by the Board of Directors; at the same time you cannot but be sensible, that for many reasons he could have no pretensions, and indeed in no way could he be the object of my own selection.

"Your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

The strangely-constituted disposition of George IV. often displayed itself in his dislike to various ministers even holding the more subordinate positions, to whom he objected as being forced upon him. It being now proposed to promote Mr. Huskisson, he offered some objections; but in this showed a certain sagacity, as it would be strengthening Mr. Canning in the Cabinet, whose friend he was. Lord Liverpool, however, and the others seem to have arranged that the King was to be humoured, by foregoing the plan and by yielding to his Majesty's objections; and it was agreed with Mr. Huskisson that he was *reculer pour mieux sauter*.

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Private].

"Pavilion, Brighton, January 3, 1823.

"MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

"I have great pleasure in acquiescing in your proposal respecting Mr. Vansittart, and in whatever way it may be agreeable to him to be raised to the peerage, I am most ready to assent to it. I beg you will have the goodness to acquaint him that I am fully sensible of the value of his past services, and the high estimation in which I hold his private character.

"I think your selection of Mr. Robinson as Mr. Vansittart's successor well judged, and one very likely to give great satisfaction to the country gentlemen.

"I hope Mr. Robinson will feel the tribute of affection and regard that has been paid to the memory of his and our friend poor Lord Londonderry by your selection.

"To Mr. Huskisson's appointment I have no objection; I think that you are quite right in abridging the number in your

Cabinet; but I leave it entirely to your decision if you should think the admission of Mr. Huskisson into the Cabinet for the good of the public service not to hesitate to do so, but upon this I rely with great confidence on your honest and prudent judgment. Who is to succeed Mr. Huskisson? for that you have not mentioned. I beg to offer you and Lady Liverpool* the compliments of the season.

"Believe me, with great regard,
"Your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

There was another who had grave misgivings as to what was going on—"Old Baggs," the Lord Chancellor. What first seriously staggered him was this introduction of Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Canning's friend, into the Cabinet. Lord Sidmouth, one of the last of the "True Blues," was leaving. Lord Liverpool had "backslided." He was almost the sole survivor of the supporters of the Constitution. "Really," he exclaims, "this is rather too much—turning out one man and introducing another in the way all this is done, is telling the Chancellor that he should not give them the trouble of disposing of him, but should (not treated as Chancellor) cease to be a Chancellor. What makes it worse is, that the great man of all has a hundred times most solemnly declared that no connection of a certain person's should come in. There is no believing one word anybody says; and what makes the matter still worse is, that everybody acquiesces most quietly, and waits in all humility and patience till their own turn comes. I have written to Liverpool (before this news came, and therefore not on the ground of this fact) that I have no wish to remain Chancellor; and, to say the truth, I think those who do remain, and especially that officer, stand a very good chance of being disgraced." The "great man" was of course his "dear master," with whom he was much discontented, and on whom, in letters to his family, he could be sarcastic enough. To his Majesty personally, however, he was lavish in professions of devotion.

("Probably July 21, 1823.)

"All the world here is running on Sundays to the Caledonian Chapel in Hatton Garden, where they hear a Presbyterian orator from Scotland, preaching, as some ladies term it, charming matter, though downright nonsense. To the shame of the King's ministers be it said, that many of them have gone to this schism

* In the preceding autumn Lord Liverpool had married Miss Chester, a niece of the first Lord Bagot.

shop with itching ears. Lauderdale told me that when Lady —— is there, the preacher never speaks of an heavenly mansion, but an heavenly pavilion. For other ears mansion is sufficient. This is a sample!"

THE KING TO LORD ELDON.

"August 18, 1823.

"My dear Friend,

"I have now to thank you for two letters: the expressions in the first bespeak so well those kind and affectionate feelings of your heart towards me, and so long known to me, as to ensure you a thorough reciprocity on my part towards yourself. With respect to the letter which I received from you this morning, I can only say that I hope you will not neglect availing yourself of the very first moment of release that you can seize from all your arduous and laborious occupations, to indulge in a little tranquillity and repose in the country, and which I pray God may be the means of very long preserving a life so very invaluable, both to me as a friend as well as to the public service.

"With sincere affection I remain always,

"G. R."

Not to be beguiled, however, Lord Eldon wrote to his venerable brother:

"The appointment of Lord Francis Conyngham in the Foreign Office has, by female influence, put Canning beyond the reach of anything to affect him, and will assuredly enable him to turn those out whom he does not wish to remain in. The King is in such thraldom that one has nobody to fall back upon. The person that has got . . . after having in conversations, I believe, uttered nothing that was kind about Canning, was one of his voters for his Cabinet office. The devil of it is, there is no consistency in anybody. Again, upon *ne cede malis*, it is better to go out than to be turned out! which will assuredly be the case. God bless you.

"Eldon."

In the following year (1824) came the alarming proposal to pass an Act allowing the Catholic Earl Marshal of England to perform his office, on merely taking the oath of allegiance. This was surely compromising the great principle of ascendency and introducing "the thin edge of the wedge." The King appears to have been rather unceremoniously treated in this matter, or gave out that he was. But the ministers could not have introduced such a measure without his sanction. He took the extraordinary course of calling the Chancellor to his aid

against his ministers. Seeing that the Chancellor had given notice of a motion to put the bill off for three months, accounts for the irritable tone of the letter to his sudden adhesion. Lord Colchester had asked him whether he was going to oppose it. He replied that "he did not know that, but he thought that it ought not to proceed now."

"Carlton House, June 23, 1824.

"The King desires to apprise the Lord Chancellor, that the King has learnt, through the medium of the newspapers, what has been passing in Parliament relative to the office of Earl Marshal of England.

"The King cannot suppose that the Lord Chancellor of England can approve of the King's dispensing with the usual oaths attached to that, or any other high office; but if the King should be mistaken in this supposition, the King desires that the Lord Chancellor will state his reasons in writing, why the King should be expected to give his consent to such an unusual and unprecedented measure. "G. R."

Yet on the following evening we find the Lord Chancellor earnestly advocating the measure! On the next evening he met his Majesty at a magnificent entertainment at Apsley House. "We did not," he says, "get there till past eight—all the turtle gone, alas! Ditto, all the fish—very splendid;—open window on my left side—got a cold thereby. In the evening hundreds came—one in fifty was as many as I knew. The King went in great state with an escort of horse. I think that job and prorogation to-day will lay him up. . . . At dinner yesterday, 1. The King. 2. Duke of York. 3. The Lady. 4, 5. Duke and Duchess of Wellington. 6, 7. Count Lieven and Lady. 8. Prince Polignac. 9. Dutch Ambassador. 10. Chancellor. 11. Marquis Conyngham. 12. His son. 13. His daughter. 14. Liverpool. 15. Bathurst. 16. Melville. 17, 18. Lord and Lady Warwick. 19, 20. Lord and Lady Gwydir. 21. Lord Glenlyon. 22. Mr. Canning. 23. Mr. Robinson. 24. Lord Maryborough. 25. Lord Westmoreland. 26. Mr. Peel. And two more, I forget who."

In such good humour was his Majesty, that when the Chancellor gave his dinner later, "he sent me a message by the Duke of York, that he would have dined if he had been asked. He should certainly have been asked if I had been aware that he would have condescended to permit me to send him an invitation. I have not heard, however, of his dining out since the Crown descended upon him. Perhaps it is better,

great as the honour would have been, that I did not know that he would have conferred it: for as to these things, such a condescension would have excited a good deal of jealousy in some men's minds."

"Parliament's last day is over, and well over. The King went to the House, and was amazingly well received in going and returning. . . . Mamma took a view of the show in her carriage. The King espied her, and, bowing to her in going, gave her no less than three acknowledgments of the same kind in returning." But notwithstanding this, his faithful loyalty was sinking lower and yet lower.

At the prorogation it was remarked that his Majesty "looked very heavy, languid, morbid, and livid: the crown pressing heavily on his brows." He was indeed in a wretched state—his legs swelling, with all the symptoms of dropsy.

"I dined with the Duke of York," goes on the Earl, "who spoke of the conduct of the Artillery at this review in terms which it would have delighted the Dyneleys to hear. Our Sovereign Lord the King did not attend. No weather would have prevented George III. from being at the head of his troops."

"There was what is called a grand review in Hyde Park yesterday, July 11th, 1824. The Duke of York was, I hear, very popular, and prodigiously cheered. My royal master was in Carlton House, *i.e.*, within half a mile of this scene, but did not approach it. It is astonishing what is lost by this sort of dealing, and it is grievous that the popularity which might be so easily earned and acquired at so small an expenditure of time and trouble, should not only not be secured, but a feeling of disgust and reproach be engendered towards a person with respect to whom a very different feeling must and ought to be created. . . . . My royal master is amusing himself, and, I am sorry to add, amusing some others, pretty publicly, at Windsor. In the overturn there the other day, in sight of the party of ladies and gentlemen, Admiral Sir E. Nagle fell on Sir A. Barnard, and hurt him. The admiral was only distressed by his small clothes being rent in pieces. He was one of the King's choice favourites.

"At about eleven, November 15th, Sir William Knighton called upon me, ordered, as he said, to give me the King's affectionate regards; and, if all Sir William said is Gospel truth, very affectionate indeed they must be. He still remains with too much gout to come to town, but hopes to manage it by Saturday, to have the Recorder's report. . . . . To-day we have Cabinet in Downing Street, and Council at Carlton House, to try if we can make a good speech for the King. But there are too

many hands at work to make a good thing of it, and so you will think, I believe, when you read it.

"The King's speech was settled yesterday, in the ante-room to his bedroom, he having too much gout to come downstairs. His arm, in which part of the disorder is, was slung in a black handkerchief, and he seemed to be in a good deal of pain. I don't much admire the composition or the matter of the speech. My old master, the late King, would have said that it required to be set off by good reading. It falls to my lot to read it, and I should read it better if I liked it better." All these attestations of feeling are amusing enough.

At this time the ambitious Secretary pressed to be made a member of the Privy Council, "as a comfort to the King," and found a patron in the Duke of Wellington, who urged that as he was in such confidential relation with the King, he must know all secrets, political and personal, and yet was not sworn to secrecy. There was a nice point involved here. Lord Liverpool objected that a private secretary had no official recognition, and that no King, until his late Majesty, had one, and that was owing to his blindness. MacMahon and Bloomfield had indeed both been Privy Councillors, but "we thought it wrong, as it conferred authority and consequence where there should be none. George III., than whom no one understood matters of this kind better, put his on the footing of our Under-Secretary of State." The oath seems rather a far-fetched idea, as both the position and an honourable understanding implied secrecy, as much as an oath.

It will have been noted that an important part has been taken in these transactions by this official, "the gentleman whom the King was kind enough to send" to the Duke, and who was now attaining an extraordinary influence, if not control, over the King. This was Sir William Knighton, who had this year been created Keeper of the Privy Purse on the fall of the favourite, Bloomfield.

Nothing indeed is more curious than the domination, steadily maintained all through his life, of favourites over the nature of the King; some working on his prejudices, others on his fears, others, again, on his affections. To those who reigned he got accustomed.

Sir John MacMahon was perhaps the most familiar name of all the favourites. He was "originally bred," we are told, in the family of Mr. Clements, and "his mother also resided in the same house." He obtained "a pair of colours" from Lord Moira, repaired to Bath, then the Irishman's hunting-ground, where he married, and through one of the royal Dukes obtained

the *entrée* to Carlton House. Never was there so adroit or useful an auxiliary. His qualifications were remarkable. "He made," we are told, "a most graceful and elegant bow, which he regulated in due proportion to the rank and influence of those he addressed. His voice was exactly modulated so as to soothe and to please, for it exhibited those undertones which never disturb the nerves of the great and powerful. He also wrote a letter in the politest style possible; nor was he unacquainted with the arts of rendering himself useful on every possible occasion." Valuable lessons here for such as wish to rise in this profession. Render yourself "useful on every possible occasion:" far better and more secure bond than regard or faithful service.

For some thirty or forty years this gentleman kept his post, becoming "Privy Seal," "Keeper of the Privy Purse," Privy Councillor, being finally created a baronet. The amount of his influence may be conceived when he arranged that this honour should be in remainder to his brother, as he himself had no children. This brother, being a distinguished officer, was a K.C.B., while a third brother, an Irish judge as distinguished, was also created a baronet. It shows there must have been ability in the family. There was a little talk when his patron appointed him to be paymaster of the sixteen hundred widows of the army. Mr. Raikes revealed him in a characteristic sketch. "George the Fourth," he says, "never had any friends: he selected his confidants from his minions. MacMahon was an Irishman of obsequious manners; he was a little man, his face red, covered with pimples, always dressed in the blue and buff uniform, with his hat on one side, copying the air of his master, to whom he was a prodigious foil, and ready to execute any commissions, which in those days were somewhat complicated." While a third spectator thus oddly draws him: "In person he was small, and devoid of beauty. His face, too, was seamed and scarred with the small-pox; but, as his conversation was pleasant and he possessed all the graces, any impression arising from a transient view soon wore off." But the hard living of the Court soon brought decay, and Mr. Grantley Berkeley, who is still living, described the faithful personal attendant grown old, with palsied hand struggling to carry the glass of old port to his lips. In 1815 he felt that it was time to retire. The courtier of this class will be found almost always "in harness" to the last, save of course in the case of sheer helplessness from old age. He is scarcely ever dismissed, for the simple reason that it is impossible to get rid of him. It can be imagined what a blow to the old courtier was his withdrawal, and how accountable it might almost seem for his death, that followed in

1817. He left behind him, it is stated in the necrology of the day, "a large fortune, which never could possibly have been obtained from the income of his several places." The amount of his personal property was £90,000, an enormous sum, which might fairly invite the speculation just alluded to. But the old man was true to his principles to the last, and by his long practice seemed to have worked himself into a belief in the virtues of his master. There was a sort of deputy agent named Marrable, who was employed in those "confidential" matters with which his Majesty was always engrossed, and of him writes the aged equerry in his will: "To Thos. Marrable, a dear and esteemed friend, £2000, and with my last prayers for the glory and happiness of the best-hearted man in the world, the Prince Regent, I bequeath him the said Thomas Marrable, an invaluable servant." The £90,000 would have been a more acceptable bequest.

MacMahon's death caused the introduction of a new favourite, who was of more powerful calibre, and who gradually came to rule in the most despotic fashion. Appointed about the Court at the particular request of Lord Wellesley, he at once made an impression. The Prince had met with an accident to his foot at Oatlands, and consulted Knighton, whom he pronounced to "be the best-mannered medical man he had ever seen." This excited a good deal of jealousy, and stories and remarks about the Princess of Wales were retailed to the Prince to injure him—the Prince's countenance at the levee "betraying displeasure." However, he triumphed over all, was made a baronet; but he formed an alliance with MacMahon, who made him his executor, while a skilful and proper stroke gave him the succession. Among his friend's papers he found some documents of "a singularly delicate nature," referring to Queen Caroline and the late Lady Jersey, which he took at once to the Regent, "without comment or condition." The Prince appointed him administrator of his Duchy of Cornwall, gave him his Grand Cross of the Guelph, and made him his most confidential adviser. He could not have found a more useful or more unwearied assistant. He brought all his complicated money embarrassments into perfect order, going on distant journeys to the Continent to arrange these matters. Meanwhile, however, another favourite had arisen. "Bloomfield was a handsome man," says Mr. Raikes, "and owed his introduction at Court to his musical talents; he was a lieutenant in the Artillery, and by chance quartered with his regiment at Brighton. The Prince, who was always fond of music, then gave frequent concerts at the Pavilion: some one happened to mention that a young officer of Artillery was a

proficient on the violoncello; an invitation was sent, the royal amateur was pleased, the visits became more frequent, a predilection ensued, and the fortune of the young lieutenant was assured." Nothing could be done without him. But the various factions at Court undermined him, and his reign was not a long one, and the picture of his decay and fall is truly instructive. When other influences set, either from his independence, or more probably because his place was desired for one of the family, nothing more pitiable could be conceived than his situation. Everyone noticed the coolness, the "snubs," and the imperturbable complacency of the victim, who for a time declined to become conscious of what was intended. Mr. Greville was among those looking on, and saw the stages of the game. He was no longer necessary to the King, who, however, was still "civil" to him. He bore this treatment in a manly way. Presently there was a tendency indeed to hustle him out of office, but this the discarded favourite would not "stand." He soon showed them he was not to be bullied, and by a determined bearing, and, as Mr. Greville says, fortified by the possession of some Court secrets, soon brought them to terms, and was actually despatched as minister to Sweden. The dismissed favourite is rarely thus handsomely dealt with, as the fact of his being discarded proves that he is powerless even to make terms.

When Bloomfield fell Knighton was made Private Secretary and Keeper of the Privy Purse. It will be seen that in the later days of the reign he had outlived his favour, but he was not to be dislodged: no *camarilla* could disturb him. His office must have been in those later days of an ungrateful kind, for the King seemed to resent his tutelage, even though in his interest. To the last, however, he maintained his position. He was, indeed, of stern stuff, and held his position long after his favour had been exhausted. He ruled by the influence a strong mind has over a weak one, and soon made it appear that he was indispensable, and that it would be inconvenient to get rid of him. He had taken on him the duty or task of arranging the King's much involved affairs, and, holding all the threads, applied himself resolutely and with success to the settlement. It was no doubt to him that was owing the cancelling of the Dutch Bonds, now undischarged for so many years. With untiring energy he would set off in the depth of winter and in all weathers to Berlin and Hanover—now arranging the Duke of York's debts, now the Duke of Brunswick's. In political matters and those connected with a ministerial crisis, he would contrive with great adroitness to soothe the King's mind and lead him gradually to whatever

consummation was devoutly to be wished by the parties concerned; and we find him settling with ministers what was to be suggested and what was likely to do. Three letters written in this very year give a great idea, not merely of how far he could go in carrying out his wishes, but of the mode he adopted for carrying them out, which seems to have amounted to a threat of leaving his Majesty to his own resources. The first is, for a professional courtier, singularly adroit. The independent and even haughty tone was well calculated to draw forth an apologetic answer.

"June 10, 1822.

"SIR,

"I yesterday received from Lord F. C. a message that it was your Majesty's desire to see me at the Lodge this morning.

"My first duty and impression was, of course, to obey your Majesty's most gracious commands; but circumstances have arisen, connected with your Majesty's interests, which oblige me to remain in town, and to forego that pleasure which is always so acceptable to my feelings, namely, that of throwing myself at your Majesty's feet.

"I am so surrounded with cares on your Majesty's account, so separated from every kind of support but what I derive from my own intellectual efforts, that when I say happiness and myself are strangers, I do not mention it in the language of complaint, but only to hope that when I venture to oppose any of your Majesty's commands, your Majesty will believe it always arises from those feelings of devotion and honesty which are the true characteristics of my nature towards your Majesty.

"I am aware it often happens, humble as I am, that it alone falls on me to raise the voice of opposition towards some of your Majesty's schemes. This, I fear, must gradually tend to separate your Majesty's mind, as far as agreeableness of feeling is concerned, from me: nevertheless, I do hope that your Majesty will believe I am on every occasion influenced with the purest affection and most unsullied attachment towards your Majesty's person."

It is signed with his initials merely. The next was written a month later.

FROM THE KING.

"Carlton House, Wednesday morning, eight o'clock, July 11, 1822.

"You may easily imagine, warm and sincere as my affections are towards you, I have had but little rest since we separated

last night. The feeling that I may possibly and unfortunately, in a hurried moment, when my mind and my heart were torn in fifty different ways from fifty different causes, have let an unjust or a hasty expression escape me to any one, most especially to you, whom I so truly love, and who are so invaluable to me as my friend, is to me a sensation much too painful to be endured: therefore let me implore you to come to me, be it but for a moment, the very first thing you do this morning; for I shall hate myself until I have the opportunity of expressing personally to you those pure and genuine feelings of affection which will never cease to live in my heart so long as that heart itself continues to beat. I am much too unhappy to say more, but I am ever your affectionate Friend,

"G. R."

This, for a King, was certainly apologetic. During the voyage to Scotland Knighton was in the most confidential relations with him, occupying the cabin next his Majesty, proving himself an indispensable right-hand man, as it is called, and, as we have seen, never sparing himself, sitting up late to answer letters, and saving his Majesty as much trouble as possible. This naturally strengthened their relations. On his return, finding that it was impossible to keep the King to his engagements, as to expense, etc., which was strictly necessary for the arrangement of his affairs, he succeeded in extracting from him the following unprecedented document, which was to be his warrant for dealing with all concerned:

"Royal Lodge, October 26, 1822.

"We hereby authorize and direct Sir William Knighton, Bart., Keeper of our Privy Purse, to give notice to our several tradesmen, that they are not to receive orders, or to furnish any articles of furniture, etc., or to incur any expense whatsoever from their different trades, where such expense is to be provided for by our said privy purse, without receiving a specific order in writing for that purpose from the said Sir William Knighton, Bart., and we do also give our authority to the said Sir William Knighton, Bart., and order and direct him, during our will and pleasure, to undertake the entire management of our private affairs, with a view to the observance of the most strict and rigid economy, that we may have the opportunity of relieving ourselves from certain embarrassments which it is not necessary to mention further in detail. We do therefore rely with confidence on the

said Sir William Knighton for the strict performance and fulfilment of all our wishes on this head.

"G. R." *

Owing to the practice of uttering his complaints to strangers and foreigners, the King indeed must have been a perpetual source of annoyance to his ministers. Thus we find that at the levee on April 21 he expressed to M. de Marcellus his approval of the French policy in Spain. A few days later *The Times* commented on this indiscreet proceeding with great violence, hinting that if the King had spoken as described, he must be suffering from something more than gout or mere physical maladies. M. de Marcellus seized the opportunity to write a sympathetic letter to Mr. Canning, which much pleased the King. At a ball the King indiscreetly referred to this matter, unburdening his grievances to Marcellus, the French minister. "If the ministers," he said, "declared me to be mad, I might recover my senses, but they would lose their places. At any rate, for the welfare of mankind, we ought not to wish any other people to have our institutions. What does pretty well for us would be worthless elsewhere. Remember this, Marcellus; it is my unalterable conviction."

* Mr. Dickie, the clerk at Coutts' Bank, who regulated the King's accounts, on his death-bed gave the following testimony to Knighton's services: "He managed and guarded his pecuniary concerns with an indefatigable care, and such a peculiar understanding, that had I not myself been a witness, I could scarcely have credited it. There were times when Sir William thought that he was getting over difficulties, when large accounts came in of which he was not aware, like thunder-claps. He has more than once on such occasions, in my presence, most respectfully but firmly remonstrated with his Majesty upon the impossibility of managing his affairs with any satisfaction, or indeed propriety of conduct, if such unforeseen expenditure occurred. Sir William's words, tone, and manner acted like magic upon the King. His Majesty, like a sensible man, seemed obliged from his heart; his whole demeanour showed it; and I myself at such a novel scene was struck with astonishment."——See also Greville, i. 72.

CHAPTER VIII.

1823—1825.

Most characteristic of the King was the course of secret opposition and *tracasseries*, by which he chose to indemnify himself for having been obliged to accept a minister like Canning, whom he disliked. He affected to give his whole confidence and friendship to the Duke of Wellington. On him, and on "him only," did he rely.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"March 19, 1823.

"My dear Friend,

"Sir William has faithfully related to me all your sensible, wise, and judicious observations respecting the state of our foreign policy. My feelings are in complete unison with your own on this most important and vital question. My confidence is in you, and you only, and in placing my friendship and affection in you, and with you, I feel safe, happy, and comfortable. I could not resist writing you these few lines, to assure you that I am, with very great regard,

"Your very sincere Friend,
"G. R."

These "feelings" were further inflamed by the appearance of Mr. Canning at a dinner given in the following year by the Radical Lord Mayor, Waithman; an obelisk to whose memory now stands at Ludgate Circus. This seemed certainly an indiscreet step, as only he and an inferior member of the Cabinet attended.

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Windsor Castle, May 1, 1824.

"The King very much regrets that the conduct of some of the members of his Government impels the King to communicate to Lord Liverpool his feelings upon this subject.

"The appearance at the dinner of the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House of two of the members of the King's Government unquestionably calls for explanation.

"The entertainment was that which belongs to the Lord Mayor himself, and not to the Corporation.

"The public life of the individual filling the office of Chief Magistrate of the City of London has been marked by a continued series of insults to the Government, to the monarchy, and, above above all, personally to the King himself. This is not matter of opinion, for several of his acts are on record, and are notorious to the world.

"Mr. Canning could not be ignorant of this, and had also long known that his visit to the Mansion House would in the highest degree be offensive and personally disagreeable to the King; that, as Mr. Canning was there almost alone, his presence marked a difference of opinion and of conduct between the other members of the Cabinet and himself.

"The King therefore thinks that he has just reason to complain, that in a case in which there was no official, or indeed any, duty to be performed, and no necessity consequently existing, why the King's expressed wishes and his known feelings should have been so entirely disregarded.

"The King desires to remind Lord Liverpool, that when at his particular desire, and that of other members of the Cabinet, the King yielded to Mr. Canning's readmission into the Government in the prominent situation which he now fills, the King consented to forget and to bury in oblivion all that had previously passed, and of which the King felt he had so much reason to complain.

"The King is quite satisfied that he has since acted with the most uniform, condescending, conciliatory, and confidential kindness towards Mr. Canning. The King desires to observe the return is now before Lord Liverpool.

The King has always shown, under all the fortuitous events that have happened, an honest, steady, and sincere desire to preserve his present Government; but the King owes it to himself and to his own honour to state that (notwithstanding the same desire exists) the King will never consent that his Government shall be degraded by such attempts to acquire popularity; and, finally, whenever the King sees anything in the conduct of any

member of his Government calculated to be injurious to the King's service, or personally offensive to his honour and feelings, the King will always feel it his duty frankly to declare it to his minister. "G. R."

The minister tried to soothe him by quoting the precedent of Mr. Pitt and assuring him that he would represent the matter to his colleague, who, he was certain, would regret having done anything to give his Majesty pain—excuses of the most conventional kind, as, indeed, the King considered them. When no letter arrived from Mr. Canning, he grew very indignant, for "it was observed," as Sir W. Knighton wrote to the Duke, that "as to the outrage offered to his feelings, Lord Liverpool might with as much propriety have referred to the days of Adam as to those of Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of extenuating Mr. Canning's conduct." The precedent, however, had more force than this. But his confidential physician, whom the King little suspected to be in communication with the other camp, was declaring to the Duke that he thought no excuses would have any effect. However, Mr. Canning wrote, expressing his concern, and the matter was allowed to drop.

The King was beginning to try what the French call the "system of the *bascule*" with his ministers. It will be noted how he distinguishes "our friend" from the rest. What the paper referred to is not clear. No wonder the Duke of Wellington at last lost all patience, and wrote to one of the King's familiars who would repeat it, "that the transaction of the King's business became a most difficult and arduous task, almost impossible to be performed. Some misfortune would happen," he prophesied, "which will occasion his Majesty a great deal of trouble."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Windsor Castle, April 30, 1824.

"My dear Friend,

"I have been very ill: indeed I am still very, very weak, and therefore I need not tell you what a painful effort it has been to me to write the enclosed, which I transmit to you and to our friend Lord Bathurst, for the purpose of delivering it jointly to Lord Liverpool on his arrival in town, that it may be submitted to the Cabinet. I really could not rest till I got this off my mind, for I cannot tell you, my dear friend, nor Bathurst, how much this has disturbed me. You and Lord Bathurst are, of course, to read the enclosed.

"Ever your affectionate Friend."

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Windsor Castle, May 1st, 1824.

"Dear Lord Liverpool,

"I transmit you the enclosed for your serious and best consideration; I have sent a copy to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Bathurst, two personal friends both of my own and of yours, that they may in conjunction with yourself know my sentiments. I have been very ill, and am still unable to leave my bed. I am glad to hear that your own health is improved, and I hope that you have not returned to business prematurely.

"I am glad that the arrangements for that worthy man, the Dean of Hereford, going to Chester are completed. You may be quite at ease about his pecuniary embarrassments.

"I wish you would give the living of Brighton, which now falls in to the Crown, to the chaplain of our friend the Duke of Wellington. The gentleman's name is Driscoll, a most respectable and good orthodox clergyman. He was with the Duke during the whole of the war, and is therefore surely entitled to our consideration. I wish you to have the entire merit of this, as the Duke is very delicate upon the subject.

"Your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

It should be considered that there had always existed a coldness, if not hostility, between the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Canning, which the King with some craft was turning to profit. The Duke invariably addressed Canning as "My dear *Mr.* Canning"—indeed it is evident from all the memoirs of the time that he now cordially disliked him. It was natural, therefore, that the effusive partiality of the King should not be wholly unacceptable where it helped to check the growing power of his colleague, whose suspicions, we find, were awakened at certain rather "underhand" proceedings, as he considered them, on the part of the King and the Duke. This arose more immediately in connection with Canning's grand *coup* of the recognition of the South American Colonies, on which the Duke had formed a strong opinion opposed to the Government plan. The recognition of Buenos Ayres had been made and agreed to by all his ministers in July, 1824; but in December it became necessary to consider the recognition of the rest, Mexico and Columbia particularly, and here the Duke was inclined to carry his disapproval so far as to resign. Lord Liverpool tried to dissuade him. The King addressed a vehement remonstrance, in which he set forth his objections to the plan. This, as he told the Duke of Welling-

ton, "he meant to be a solemn protest against the measures of his servants"—an idle, childish form which he fancied in other more important matters was as good as action. He "chuckled," however, as Mr. Canning said, on a little embarrassment which he hoped his Cabinet had got into in reference to an intended prosecution of Mr. O'Connell. He asked the Duke how they could take this course, when they were actually going to make a treaty with Bolivar, who was much in the same position. The Duke was puzzled and could give no answer, at least "without hair-splittings." Mr. Canning wrote pleasantly that it might be fancied that therefore the King wished the prosecution to be stopped. The workings of the King's mind seem to have furnished intense amusement to his ministers. The strong force by which he had been driven to sanction these measures inclined him to give vent to his feelings in a most singular proclamation or manifesto of his opinions and grievances *in globo*—his general dissatisfaction at the whole. This course he adopted on several occasions, and was always met with a hint to put his objections in shape by finding other ministers and declining to sanction the proceedings of his present servants.

In this long protest was a profession of political faith, and a curious reassertion of the principles held when he was Prince of Wales. The document, Mr. Wynne writes, was dictated by foreign influence—no doubt that of Madame de Lieven.

Mr. Canning was quite certain that the King was acting under this influence. "I am quite aware," he says, "that the King has strong prejudices on this subject. . . . I think he should be set right upon this point, as well as made to feel that the opinions which he sometimes avows on the subject of legitimacy would carry him to the full length of the principle of the Emperor of Russia and Prince Metternich." This appeal was dated on the 8th of December. When Lord Liverpool went to Windsor on the 16th he was asked significantly by his Majesty: "Were they unanimous?" And on the following day the minister received this protest or manifesto—a singular composition:

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Royal Lodge, Dec. 17, 1824.

"The King cannot allow to pass unnoticed the minute of Cabinet transmitted by Mr. Canning on the 15th instant.

"The King always wishes to concur with the opinions of his Cabinet. It is, therefore, with deep regret that the King finds himself under the necessity of differing from the majority of the Cabinet upon the present occasion.

"The King considers that the system of policy of his Government upon this subject has been erroneous, and that instead of seeking for opportunities to promote even that policy, such as it is, the measures now recommended should have been forced upon us by circumstances not to be avoided or controlled.

"However, the King will not oppose himself to the measures considered for the benefit of his subjects, and for the promotion of the navigation (?) of the country, by those to whom the King has given his confidence.

"The King wishes that these measures should stand on the ground of the interests of his subjects, and not as measures of war or retaliation against other Powers; and that they should not be put forth to the world as having any other objects in view than those which the King has stated as his motive for assenting to them.

"The King wishes that his allies and the King of Spain should be informed of the present intention, previous to its being carried into effect, and in such language and manner as may make the communication as little obnoxious as possible."

He was inspired to renew the matter. The plan he thought of was the extraordinary one of requiring each member of the Cabinet to forward to him his separate opinion on the point. This, as one of the ministers observed, pointed to an attempt at breaking up the Cabinet. They were easily able, by an adroit reply, to turn this clumsy movement, answering him with respectful gravity.

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Carlton House, January 27th, 1825.

"The King thinks it right to draw the attention of his Cabinet to the sentiments and opinions contained in the accompanying paper. The King therefore desires that Lord Liverpool will lay the paper before the Cabinet for the purposes required.

"G. R."

[ENCLOSURE.]

"The line of policy pursued by the King's Government, under the King's direction at the close of the late war, which terminated under such happy circumstances, was unanimity of co-operation with the great Continental Powers, not only for the purpose of putting an end to the then existing hostilities, but for preserving the future peace and tranquillity of Europe.

"The late Lord Londonderry, in conjunction with the Duke of Wellington, so effectively accomplished this great and desirable object, that this country took a position that she had never before held.

"The King supposes it will not be denied that the anarchy produced through the world by the French Revolution, has left us a record so instructive, that the councils of the British Government should never fail to be regulated by the wholesome remembrance of that terrible event.

"That we should therefore regard with the most anxious suspicion every attempt to revive the example of British America, which ended, unhappily for Great Britain, in a separation from the mother country. France treacherously assisted that rebellion's successful enterprise, and by her fatal policy gave the first impulse to that revolution which entailed for a quarter of a century such complicated misery on the whole of Europe. The revolutionary spirit of past years, although lulled and suspended, is by no means extinguished; and it would be wisdom to look to the ultimate consequences which the result of our intended recognition of the independence of the South American provinces may probably produce on the evil and discontented, who are controlled, even at this moment, with difficulty, by the established power of regular governments.

"Let us also look at home, and observe the dangerous attempts which the active firebrands of Ireland are at this time pursuing under the deceptive pretence of Catholic emancipation. The rebellious and organised schemes so actively afloat in that unhappy country are only a part of the same system promoted by the same evil spirit which gave rise to the calamities of the French Revolution.

"The Liberalism of late adopted by the King's Government appears to the King to be a substantial part of that creed which was hailed in the House of Commons in those revolutionary days when it required all the talent and firmness of Mr. Pitt to put it down; and the support which that great statesman received from the King's revered and excellent father gave him the opportunity of using his great ability with such effect as enabled him successfully to resist the desolating storm.

"The King has long been aware that the principles promulgated by the King's early friends were at that period the bane which threatened the destruction of our happy Constitution, and with it our internal peace and happiness; and if the King withdrew himself from his early friends for the good of the country, can the present Government suppose that the King will permit any individuals to force upon him, at this time, a line of policy

of which he so entirely disapproves, and which is in direct opposition to those wise principles which the King's Government has for so many years supported and uniformly acted upon?

"The King would wish to ask Lord Liverpool whether he supposes the great abettors of this Spanish-American question, connected with the Opposition, give their support to a recognition of the Spanish provinces, in relation to the great mercantile advantages which this measure may offer to this country, or from their love of democracy in opposition to a monarchical aristocracy.

"The King has no difficulty in answering this question: and let the opportunity arise, the same line of conduct would be as promptly applied by these gentlemen to the emancipation of our own colonial possessions, or to any other of the remote colonial settlements, at present under the dominion of the British Crown.

"The King cannot but be aware that this, as well as every other kingdom, must have its own latent sources of wealth and power, peculiar to itself, the cultivation of which becomes essential to the maintenance of its individual prosperity; but the King desires to observe that the policy or wisdom which is to balance the interest of kingdoms is not to be found in party divisions.

"The King has too much reason to apprehend that the separation from our Allies, so justly and so honestly referred to by the Emperor of Austria, will very soon lead to consequences that will end in disturbing the tranquillity of Europe.

"Why was the Quadruple Alliance formed? To carry into execution, not only the maintenance of the treaties of peace connected with the settlement of Europe (just then concluded), but also for the purpose of controlling the ambitions and the jealousies of the great Allied Powers themselves in relation to each other.

"The Jacobins of the world (now calling themselves the Liberals) saw the peace of Europe secured by this great measure, and have therefore never ceased to vilify the principle of the Quadruple Alliance. The late policy of Great Britain has loosened these beneficial ties, by demonstrating a restless desire of self-interest in direct opposition to these wise and comprehensive principles, in which the peace and general interests of Europe were bound together.

"The King desires, therefore, distinctly to know from his Cabinet individually, *seriatim*, whether the great principles of policy established by his Government in the years 1814, 1815, and 1818, are or are not to be abandoned.

"The answer to this question will enable the King to satisfy himself of the steps necessary to be taken for the purpose of

preventing this country from being again involved in a ruinous and disastrous war.

"G. R."

The foreign influence ever working on the King's mind appears to have been highly irregular. He would have constant interviews with the Metternichs, Esterhazys (to say nothing of Madame de Lieven), during which he delivered himself on his situation, asked sympathy, and uttered those long harangues to which he was so addicted.

The extraordinary request to have separate opinions from each member of the Cabinet, pointed to an attempt, as we have said, at breaking up the Cabinet. As they met for the purpose of obeying his commands, they must have been scarcely able to control their amusement. Their answer gave him but cold comfort. There was, indeed, a sort of ironical strain through it, though this arises from the unanswerable character of the statement. Mr. Canning wrote a special explanation to the King, on the ground that an insinuation was made that hitherto there had not been that full and faithful confidence and communication with the Allies. He then entered on a long *resumé* of his policy. The King had thus almost succeeded in his plan of at least making the opposing elements in the Cabinet declare themselves.

To this exposition there was, it appears, some qualifying words which were omitted, owing, Mr. Canning says, to his "being ill and tired to death with Westmoreland's discussions." And this the King "dexterously seized on, declaring himself satisfied with the pledge given by his ministers (of reciprocal confidence with the Allies), and throwing all responsibility upon the mode of action upon it."

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Carlton House, January 30th, 1825.

"The King has received from Lord Liverpool the declaration of the Cabinet in reply to the King's paper.

"The King has only to observe that if an earnest desire of 'maintaining the system of confidence and reciprocal communication with the Allies' be fully and faithfully acted upon, it is all that the King can require.

"The King readily admits Lord Liverpool's statement that the recognition, at this time, of the South American provinces was certainly in opposition to the King's own judgment; but the King hopes, as the step has been taken, that it will prove a measure full

of the beneficial results which are anticipated, by adding to the prosperity of this country without interfering with the general peace and tranquillity of Europe."

In his irritation at these events, the King was enabled to find some relief in indulging his "religious feelings." He was naturally embarrassed when public reference was made to his Concordat as King of Hanover "with Pope Leo, by Bull, dated March 26th, 1824, for regulating the dioceses and endowments of Roman Catholic bishops and chaplains in the Kingdom of Hanover, with a domestic election of bishops, etc., subject to a royal veto and papal confirmation; such as," Lord Colchester says, "if established in England, with 'the spiritual authority' therein reserved, would be tantamount to a counter-reformation; and be (according to Lord Liverpool's declaration, in his last speech on the Roman Catholic question) a violation of the King's coronation oath in this country."

This was awkward enough; indeed, the whole question was to involve all concerned in inconsistencies and compromises. The King addressed himself to Lord Liverpool for comfort.

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"King's Lodge, Feb. 25, 1825.

"The King sends his kind regards to Lord Liverpool, and is more distressed than can well be expressed at the absurd note which has been lately published in Germany, relative to the Catholic Association, in reference to the local circumstances of that country. The King had no knowledge of such an intention, or it would most certainly not have happened.

"The King desires that Lord Liverpool would send for Count Münster, that he may explain the details of the affair. The King is afraid that whatever inconvenience may arise from this late declaration has its origin in the line of policy and original stipulations entered into by our much regretted friend, poor Lord Londonderry, so long since, at the Congress held at Vienna. The King wishes, however, distinctly to state to Lord Liverpool that on the subject of Catholic emancipation, the King's revered father's opinions are ever before him and ever will be, to the King's latest existence.

"G. R."

Lord Liverpool replied dryly that he "never supposed the paper connected with any alteration in your Majesty's mind."

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"Carlton House, Wednesday morning, May 18, 1825.

"DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

"I congratulate you most sincerely on your successful efforts of last night. God be thanked. Your speech was indeed most powerful. I hope you will not suffer from the great exertions.

"Your very sincere Friend,

"G. R."

CHAPTER IX.

1825.

When the Catholic question was once more brought forward—perhaps the most serious of the many struggles that immediately preceded the settlement of the question—the Duke of York, when presenting an anti-Catholic petition, took occasion to deliver his well-known apostrophe, which was to enjoy the honour of being printed on pocket-handkerchiefs, and also in letters of gold to be framed and hung up in loyal houses. The topics of this unbecoming appeal were the usual ones, but there were personal references in the worst taste, while others, taking a rather theatrical tone, were outside argument.

"What the effect of the proposal of such measures was at that day (the late King's), your lordships know. The apprehension that the Sovereign might be called upon to differ with his Parliament in the discharge of his duty—to adhere to his coronation oath, the compact he had made at the altar of God—led to affliction"—(here he could not proceed)—"and to the temporary dismissal of the best, the honestest, and the wisest minister he ever had. I have opposed the concessions of popular power from the first moment in which it was proposed to make them. I have so acted throughout, under a conviction, whenever I have been called upon to act, that I was bound so to act. I shall continue to oppose such concessions to the utmost of my power. My lords, allow me to call your attention to what must be the state of the King upon the throne, who has taken this coronation oath"—(here he read the oath). "The dread of being called upon—of having it even proposed to him—to act contrary to his understanding of that oath, led, or materially con-

tributed, to his late Majesty's sufferings in the last ten years of a life"—(here he could not proceed, and was in tears: after a pause he said)—"My lords, if you have taken oaths, and differ about the meaning of them, those who think proposed measures contrary to their sense of their oaths are overborne by a majority—they do their duty—they act according to their oaths—the measure is carried without their violating their compact with God. But recollect that it is not so with the individual who is the Sovereign. He has a right—if he is convinced that it is his duty—to refuse his assent when the measure is proposed to him. His refusal is a constitutional bar to the measure—his consent, if given contrary to his understanding of his oath, is that for which he must ever be responsible. My lords, I understand my duty in this place too well, to be stating what any other person may or may not feel with respect to these proposed measures, what any other person may or may not propose to do, or to forbear doing. I speak for myself only; for myself only I declare my opinions and determinations. But I apprehend that I may be in this place allowed to call your attention to observations upon what may be the state of a sovereign to whom measures may be proposed; who is not to consider what oath might have been administered to him, and taken by him, but who has taken an oath."

A characteristic comment on this deluding "self-righteousness" of fanaticism is to be found in a letter of Lord Eldon's, a week or two later: "The D. of Y. is at Newmarket. It is to be regretted that, in his highly important and lofty situation, he spends so many days with blacklegs, and so many nights at cards, among which we know there are knaves, as well as what are better company for him, kings and queens."

"Monday, May 23, 1825.

"We had a most sumptuous and splendid set-out at the Duke of York's on Saturday—twenty-four rejoicing Protestants round the table—and such a magnificent show of plate as even eclipses the King's exhibition of that article, and, as it appears to me, eclipses all of the same article which all the monarchs of Europe have presented to the Duke of Wellington. We drank the '48, the year 1688, and the glorious and immortal memory of William the Third—but without noise or riot.

"I saw the King yesterday, who is much better, and not a little relieved in point of anxiety by the vote on the Catholic question. So much for the present; but politics may possibly soon present some other troublesome matter, for it is in the nature of politics to be restless, and to furnish plague after plague."

"Wednesday, May 25, 1825.

"I forgot to tell you yesterday that we have got a new favourite toast. Lady Warwick and Lady Braybrooke (I think that is her name) would not let their husbands go to the House to vote for the Catholics; so we Protestants drink daily, as our favourite toast, 'The ladies who locked up their husbands.'"

The Duke's inflammatory language was the subject of much comment. There can be no doubt the King was pleased with it, though he good-humouredly affected to complain of that awkward reference to his successor—"in whatever situation he might be." The royal brothers had met on the Sunday preceding, and when the King opened the subject of the Catholic claims, the Duke begged of him not to mention the subject until some days had gone by; for, as he told Lord Eldon, he was determined to take the whole responsibility of this protest. The effect was extraordinary. It kindled again the bigotry of the country, which was rather flickering, and stimulated the King to new deliverances.

"Two days afterwards," says Lord Colchester, "the Duke of York, at the levee, told Lord Sidmouth that 'the King had declared that he would not give the royal assent to such a bill;' a declaration made, not publicly, but not unknown to the Duke of York. The Chancellor told me he had had a long audience of the King this morning, in which his Majesty went through the whole of his political life as connected with opinions upon the Roman Catholic question, and represented himself to have been ever uniformly against, or at least that he had never been for, increasing the powers of the Roman Catholics; and that he was now very anxious upon the subject, and exceedingly disturbed at the progress of the bill depending in the House of Commons."

And on receiving the congratulations of the archbishops and bishops at the Drawing Room, he "took notice of the delicacy with which all mention was avoided of the great constitutional question lately under discussion; and declared that he considered the Church and the monarchy as essentially united; and that they must stand or fall together. He said also to the Bishop of Lincoln, 'this will corroborate what my brother (the Duke of York) has said.'"

The bill was rejected in the House of Lords by a majority of forty-eight.

At this time the Duke of Wellington was enjoying the highest favour of the King, who was exhibiting his regard by the greatest kindness and the most tender solicitude. Towards Christmas in 1826 the office of Constable of the Tower fell vacant.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, December 21st, 1826.

"My dear Friend,

"I must tell you that I feel a pride, whenever the opportunity offers, of showing not only the affection I have for you, but the gratitude which this country owes you. The glory of my reign is so identified with you that the one cannot be separated from the other. It is like yourself to think so little of yourself, and as you do not choose to hold the office of Constable of the Tower and the Government of Plymouth together, take that which will be most agreeable to your own feelings. If you do not take that of Constable of the Tower, I will then bestow it on Field Marshal Earl Harcourt, now, from his great age, the father of the whole army. In that case I shall appoint my old and attached friend and servant, Sir William Keppell, to succeed him in the Government of Portsmouth, to whom I have long owed this debt of proper feeling. Upon your taking the Constableship, then Earl Harcourt shall go to Plymouth, and my intentions towards Keppell will still be fulfilled by the Governorship of Portsmouth. I have given you this detailed explanation to set you quite at your ease, and, believe me, ever yours affectionately,

"G. R.

"P.S.—Give me one line, with your decision, as soon as you can. Alas! my poor brother."

In a manly letter the Duke wrote to decline keeping the Governorship of Plymouth, on the ground that his officers "would form a very injurious notion of him if they found that he was competing with them for honours." The other post, however, he accepted.

This eagerness to propitiate the Duke was not unlikely to have been connected with an extraordinary idea which, on the death of his brother, had taken possession of him, namely, to assume the command of the army. Even before the Duke of York's death he had been sounding the Duke as to a successor, proposing him for the office; on which the Duke entreated of him not to think of the matter until his brother's demise and then to be guided by his ministers. His Majesty, however, persevered, talked of the suitability of himself as a candidate, but on the whole inclined to the Duke. The latter left town purposely, to be out of the way. "I have always considered this conversation, like many others, as so many unmeaning words and phrases." The Duke was ever consistent in this half-contemptuous opinion. "I will protest against it in the most

formal manner." The ministers were indignant, Mr. Peel declaring the "idea was preposterous," and they would never agree to it. The King proceeded to make arrangements, proposing that Sir H. Taylor should do the serious work as secretary, and "give commands in his name." The latter was only too eager to be released from this embarrassing honour, and was communicating with the ministers. At last Sir W. Knighton was set at work, and the only proper appointment—that of the Duke himself—was made.

When the Duke of Wellington was away on his mission at St. Petersburg, the King was seized with about the severest fit of illness he had yet encountered. All about him were seriously alarmed. A violent attack of gout and inflammation were the ailments from which he was suffering, but, as usual, his fine constitution enabled him to rally. The Duke of York's conduct was pronounced to be "perfect," and he was complimented on his behaviour to his brother being "so easy, so natural, it seems as if it never occurs to him that the King is mortal." This indeed was but a fitting tribute to this amiable, well-meaning Prince, who counted many genuine friends in the community, and who ever showed himself a true, manly, straightforward English gentleman.

CHAPTER X.

1825.

The skilled emissaries of foreign countries may have found their account in interviews with his Majesty, but they soon learned they had to deal with their master. It is pleasant to read Mr. Canning's spirited mode of dealing with the ambassadors; and one can well understand the high position in Europe held by the country under his direction. "The last three mornings," he writes in March, 1825, "have been occupied partly in receiving the three successive communications of Count Lieven, Prince Esterhazy, and Baron Maltzahn, of the high and mighty displeasure of their Courts with respect to Spanish America. Lieven led the way on Wednesday. He began to open a long despatch evidently with the intention of reading it to me. I stopped *in limine*, desiring to know if he was authorised to give a copy of it. He said 'No;' upon which I declined hearing it, unless he could give me his word that no copy would be sent to any other Court. He said he could not undertake to say that it would not be sent to other Russian missions, but that he had no notion that a copy of it would be given to the Courts at which they were severally accredited. I answered that I was determined either to have a copy of a despatch which might be quoted to foreign Courts (as former despatches had been), as having been communicated to me, and remaining unanswered, or to be able to say that no despatch had been communicated to me at all. It was utterly impossible for me, I said, to charge my memory with the expressions of a long despatch once read over to me, or to be able to judge on one such hearing whether it did or did not contain expressions which I ought not to pass over without

remark. Yet by the process now proposed I was responsible to the King and to my colleagues, and ultimately perhaps to Parliament, for the contents of a paper which might be of the most essentially important character; and of which the text might be quoted hereafter by third parties, as bearing a meaning which I did not on the instant attribute to it, and yet which upon bare recollection I could not controvert. Lieven was confounded. He asked me what he was to do. I said, what he pleased; but I took the exception now before I heard a word of his despatch, because I would not have it thought that the contents of the despatch, whatever they might be, had anything to do with that exception. I must, however, own that I was led to make it now, the rather because I had learnt from St. Petersburg that he, Count Lieven, had been instructed not to give me a copy of the despatch on Turkey and Greece, which instruction his own good sense had led him to disobey; that in that instance it was absolutely preposterous to refuse a copy; that the despatch professed to be a narrative, of which dates and facts were the elements; and that to have read such a statement to me, and then circulated it throughout Europe as what had been communicated to me, and acquiesced in by my silence, would have been an unfairness such as it was as well to let him know, once for all, I was determined to resist. Might he state to me verbally what he was ordered to state without reference to his despatch? He then proceeded to pronounce a discourse—no matter for the substance at present—after which he left me. I instantly wrote down the substance of what I understood him to have said to me, and sent him my memorandum, with a letter requesting him to correct any inaccuracies. The result is, that I have a document in spite of all their contrivance. Yesterday the same scene with Esterhazy, who had not seen Lieven in the interval, and therefore came unprepared. He, too, made me a speech, and to him I immediately sent a memorandum of what I understood him to have said. I have not yet received his answer. To-day Maltzahn came, evidently prepared; for he produced no paper, but set off at score. This rather provoked me, for he is the worst of all; but I was even with him. For whereas with the others I merely listened, and put in no word of my own, I thought it a good opportunity to pay off my reserve upon Maltzahn; and accordingly said to him a few as disagreeable things as I could upon the principle of legitimacy."

Under all this was indignation at the private communications with the King. How he was preparing to deal with this conduct will be seen by the following extract from one of his letters: "I wonder whether he (Metternich) is aware that the

private communication of foreign ministers with the King of England is wholly at variance with the spirit, and practice too, of the British Constitution. That, during his reign of half a century, George III. (whom all parties now agree in taking as the model of an English king) never indulged himself in such communications, and that the custom introduced in the time of my predecessor survives only by sufferance, and would not stand the test of parliamentary discussion. I should be very sorry to do anything at all unpleasant to the King, but it is my duty to be present at every interview between his Majesty and a foreign minister. Nothing would induce me to go to that extent; but short of that, being in the right, I would justly resent, and pretty effectually repress, such manœuvres as Metternich has been encouraging."

It is seldom that a minister talks in this strain of his sovereign, and it was clear that matters would soon have come to a crisis; but a little more than a fortnight later, a wholesome foreboding seems to have visited his Majesty, who, either from a whim or sense of its being his interest, determined on a complete *volte face*. The pliant Sir William was despatched on a formal mission to the minister, then laid up with the gout. Mr. Stapleton, the secretary, who was with his chief, describes the scene, and also furnishes a report of what passed, dictated to him by Mr. Canning.

"On April 27th, 1825," he says, "Mr. Canning, not having been well (had passed the day in bed), was dictating a despatch, when a carriage drove up to the door. The servant was desired to inquire 'whether Mr. Canning would not see, for a very few minutes, Sir William Knighton, who was the bearer of a message from the King?' Mr. Canning, who well knew that Sir William had been actively mixed up in the late proceedings, looked at me with amazement, when I reported to him the message from Sir William. He, however, at once decided to admit the messenger from his sovereign. At length, when three hours had nearly elapsed, Sir William left, and I rejoined Mr. Canning.

"Well," he said, with a countenance beaming with pleasure, "we have had a most curious and satisfactory conversation. Take a sheet of paper and I will dictate to you what has passed."

"[Most Secret Memorandum.]

"Gloucester Lodge, April 27, 1825.

"Sir William Knighton called upon me to-day by the command, as he said, of his Majesty, to inquire after the state of my health. Sir W., after inquiring about the gout, hoped Parliament would not give me much more trouble this year, so he flattered himself also that in other respects I should have less

occasion of agitation and anxiety than heretofore; that he was quite aware that the last year must have been to me most trying, and the pulse of the mind (as he expressed himself) must have been going at the rate of sixteen miles an hour.

"I admitted that there was some truth in this observation, and said that I dated the origin of my present fit of the gout at least as far back as December. But that in truth from the rising of Parliament last year up to December (which was the crisis) had been a period of constant labour and anxiety. I did not particularise this statement further; but he at once showed that he understood me, and had, in fact, himself been alluding to the same thing, by saying, that I must be aware that the King had sent him to the Continent three or four times during the last six months; that whenever he had gone he had, of course, had his eyes and ears about him, and had been anxious to collect general feelings and opinions—that he was quite satisfied that the Spanish-American question was everywhere working in the sense which I could desire; that foreign nations were astounded at the step, and some of them very angry, but that not one of them ventured to imagine that it was possible to interpose any resistance to England. That Metternich had been trying what he could do, and covering his intrigues with the most plausible topics, but that his motive at the bottom was soreness at my success, and envy of my reputation, from which motive he would have done anything to get rid of me. But that he (Metternich) was now convinced that I was too strong for him, and would, he (Sir W. K.) had no doubt, henceforth try to accommodate himself to circumstances as well as he could.

"Sir W. K. said that he failed not to mention his own impressions to the King, and that he had never in his life seen the King so tranquil and comfortable as he appeared at the present moment. I said that it was my object to make his Majesty comfortable and happy, by placing him at the head of Europe instead of being reckoned fifth in a Great Confederacy.

"I said that I was aware that the King had been afraid that the steps taken with respect to Spanish-America would involve us in a war; that I was perfectly confident that they would not if taken in time. . . . Sir W. K. said that the King had certainly entertained that fear, but was now perfectly satisfied that his fears had been unfounded; that he (Sir W. K.) was certain that, on the contrary, the fear of England was a predominant feeling with the Continental Governments. I said that I hoped so; that that was the state to which I had wished to bring things, and that I trusted his Majesty must feel better pleased, upon reflection, to be the object of such fear, than of cajolery and contempt.

Sir W. K. said that he felt sure that his Majesty was coming to that mind; that he had certainly been very loth to give up all his Continental gossipings (or some expression to that effect) to which he had been accustomed too much and too long; that it was a great misfortune that the royalties and their suites had ever come to this country, but that he did hope that the effects of all that system were gradually passing away; and that Esterhazy's departure and Madame L——'s would be a break-up of the system of living with those two embassies, which he (Sir W. K.) had long lamented. I asked him, then, if he were aware that the gossipings of the Cottage were regularly transmitted to Metternich by Madame L——. He said he had no doubt of it, but that he very much doubted whether in their Cottage parties the King ever talked serious politics at any of them, though, of course, they had an opportunity of instilling any opinions which they wished; but the King certainly liked their society better than any others, and was somewhat at a loss to make up a society for himself.

"Sir W. K. went on to say, that upon all points, and upon everything connected with the King, he wished (if I would allow him) to speak to me at all times with the most perfect confidence and unreservedness; that he did not know that he could do any good, but that he was sure that it was his wish to do so, and that he had long desired an opportunity of explaining himself thus openly to me; that he could not help at the same time saying something of his own situation with the King, which was a very extraordinary, and might become a very embarrassing one. That, officially, he was nothing but Keeper of the Privy Purse, the concerns of which, he flattered himself, he had now brought into order; so that the King was now free from debt, and in a state of ease as to his finances that he had never been before; but that as Keeper of the King's Privy Purse he had nothing to do with politics, yet politics of every sort were every day forced upon him; applications, petitions, representations of all sorts, which he got rid of as well as he could, but which made his life a very weary one. He had access to everything that was most secret, and was employed, not by his own good-will, but necessarily for the King's convenience, on matters of the most delicate nature, for which he had no sort of responsibility; that for his own part he could well be contented to be allowed to live with his family, and come up occasionally to pass his accounts with the King. He could just as well administer the King's private revenue, living at a distance from his Majesty, as Abercrombie could the revenues of the Duke of Devonshire in England. But that he knew the putting this plan into execution would expose

his Majesty to great inconvenience; that his Majesty was used to him and to his help; and such was the growing disposition to indolence in his Majesty, that if he were away, business would get on very ill . . . that it was a most painful part of his (Sir W. K.'s) duty to press business upon his Majesty, when it was absolutely necessary to be done . . . . and that his doing so sometimes produced unpleasant scenes. . . . 'I believe (said Sir W. K.) he has as great an esteem and affection for me as anybody living; but he is uncertain, the creature of impulse . . . . when he has got a particular notion into his head there is no eradicating it; and I have known him talk himself, when agitated and perfectly fasting, into as complete a state of intoxication as if he had been dining and drinking largely. You see, therefore, that it is natural that I should wish for some arrangement. As to money, it is no object to me: I made my fortune by my profession before I quitted it for the King's service.'

"I keep myself as much as possible to myself in my present situation. I make it a rule never to dine abroad. I constantly refuse Lieven's and Esterhazy's; and even the other day, when you dined at the Duke of Wellington's with the King, I declined his gracious invitation, and therefore do not push myself forward; but my situation is not the less embarrassing, knowing everything, and known to know everything, and assailed on all sides, not allowed to be the private servant of the King, and yet not having any connection with his Government."

"I asked, 'Have you any desire to be in Parliament?' 'Oh no,' he said. In truth, it seemed very difficult to him to say what would answer his purpose; that all his object had been to open himself fully to me, and to explain all his feelings and all the difficulties of his present situation, that I might think it over at my leisure, or think no more about it, as I pleased; but that as long as I held my office, which he hoped would be very many years, and he remained about the King, I might rely upon his entire devotion, and employ him in any way which I thought useful in making things go on easily and satisfactorily. He thought the King very well, and quite as likely to live as the Duke of York. The mention of the Duke of York's name led to that of the Catholic question. He said the King knew nothing of the Duke of York's intention to make that speech, and certainly did not approve of it; that his Majesty had been so much out of humour with the Duke of York, about a house that he was going to build—so much so, that they nearly came to disagreeable words about it, and that he (Sir W. K.) had been employed to compose

the difference; that the King always likes the Duke of York to go to the play with him, and was in an excessive fidget and anger when the Duke did not come to dine; and that his ill-humour would certainly not be cured by hearing what kept him away. I asked him if the King, though not disposed to express it, had the same feeling as the Duke of York about the Coronation Oath. He said not the same, or to the same degree, but certainly a strong feeling about it; so much so, that he had, before he became King, consulted the late Lord Londonderry as to the expediency of altering it before he was called upon to take it. I asked if there was any record of that consultation, and if he knew what had been done upon it. He said he did not know, nor did he believe that there was anything in writing; but that he was quite sure that the King had told him the fact, and that he would endeavour to refresh his memory as to the particulars. The difficulty which you will have with the King will be to satisfy him that the decision of Parliament and the advice of his Government ought to overbear his scruples. I said, of that there can be no doubt, as the King of England can do nothing, except by the advice of his responsible advisers. He may indeed change his advisers as often as he pleases, till he gets those who will advise what he likes, if he can; but on this occasion, I doubt whether, changing ever so often, he will be able to make a completely anti-Catholic Government which would long stand. 'Oh no! (said Sir W. K.) it would be quite impossible; he has no notion of that, I am sure; but I think he would like to dissolve the Parliament, and take the sense of a second House of Commons.' On which I said I thought I saw in that nothing unreasonable. 'My expectation (said Sir W. K.) is that when the thing comes a little nearer and more pressing, his Majesty will wish to talk to you upon the subject.' 'It is one (said I) upon which, divided as the Government is, I should not think myself at liberty to originate any advice or opinion to his Majesty; but of course, as upon everything else, I should be ready to speak my opinion if he wishes to talk to me.' Lord Liverpool, he said, of course, if he does not make up his mind to support the question, will go out, if it should become necessary to carry it; though the state of the Government upon the question is now such as you allude to, it is evident that the settlement of it must be made by a Government. I said I saw no necessity for Lord Liverpool to go out, and I trusted that he had no thought of it. He said, 'You may depend upon it he would, and that he has made up his mind to do so; and then,' he added, 'I never saw Lord Liverpool in such an amiable humour, and so says the King, who was delighted

with him at the levee on Wednesday, and said that he was all *suaviter in modo.*' He (Sir W. K.) then went on: Peel, too, would go out on account of Oxford. I said, God forbid! for he was certainly the most efficient Secretary of State for the Home Department that this country ever saw, and the most able and honest minister. Indeed, I added, the King ought to be aware that he owes the unexampled comfort and tranquillity which he at present enjoys, and which (said Sir W. K., interrupting) he admits never to have enjoyed before. Well, I said, he owes it not to Lord Liverpool and me only, in our respective situations, but to the extraordinary efficiency with which those other great departments of the State are filled by Peel, Robinson, and Huskisson; those offices were never so filled all together before. Sir W. K. agreed to this, and went off in a great panegyric about Huskisson: but, to my surprise, said nothing about Robinson, whom I believed to be one of the greatest favourites of the King, and particularly of Knighton. He then reverted to Peel, and gave reasons why he thought he would go out. His health, his wealth, his desire of leisure, and particularly of travelling; but without any particular praise of Peel, whom I had also imagined to be one of Sir W. K.'s first favourites.

"He talked of the Duke of Wellington as the person in whom the King had great confidence, though he thought he saw him much less than heretofore, when the Continental system was in more vogue. He thought the Duke essentially ill, but hoped that he was now taking care of himself. Several other matters of less consequence arose in the course of the conversation, of which I entertain no very distinct recollection. The cause of the visit probably was as stated, the King's command to inquire after my gout . . . but the main object which he (Sir W. K.) evidently had at heart, was to set himself right with me as to the intrigues of last summer, of which he knows that I suspect him, and perhaps suspects that I knew him to be, if not an active instrument, a very interested spectator, and to bring his situation before me with a view to some object, and in the contemplation of some contingency, which I do not pretend to divine."

In September, 1825, Mr. Canning found himself, as was to be expected, directly confronted with the grand question, which by his principles and declarations he was bound to favour. There were many reasons why it would have been inconvenient for him to deal with it then: not the least of which was the impracticable mood of the King. He contrived to put it aside for the moment, addressing a letter to Mr. Plunket, setting out the "inopportunes" of the time, "the certainty of its rousing unconquerable

hostility," but he added a promise of bringing it forward at the first opportunity after a dissolution.

"I am aware," he added, "to what misconstructions this proceeding may possibly expose me. I need hardly say that I had much rather that this extreme measure was averted by the discretion of those of the Catholic body with whom the bringing the question forward may rest." But so fixed was his resolution, he said he was determined to move the previous question, should it be brought on.

This letter he forwarded to the King, with a skilfully-written one of his own.

"Dated Oct. 19, 1825.

"Mr. Canning, in submitting with his humble duty the accompanying copy of a letter for your Majesty's gracious perusal, humbly entreats your Majesty to believe that he does not presume to entertain the slightest wish or expectation that your Majesty should condescend to express any opinion upon the subject to which it relates.

"But in the very embarrassing situation in which that subject is placed (by no fault of anyone, but through its own intrinsic difficulties), Mr. Canning is, above all things, anxious that your Majesty should be informed (if your Majesty will deign to receive such information) of any step taken by Mr. Canning, individually, upon a question upon which your Majesty's confidential servants do not offer to your Majesty any collective opinion.

"For himself, Mr. Canning begs leave most humbly to assure your Majesty, that however impossible it would be for Mr. Canning at any time to pursue, consistently with his honour and conscientious conviction, any other course than that which he has hitherto pursued upon this most momentous and perplexing question, sentiments of affectionate duty and grateful attachment to your Majesty make him feel at all times no less the wish than the obligation to consult to the utmost of his power, in the discussions which may arise upon this question, your Majesty's ease and comfort, and to omit no endeavour by which the decision upon it (whatever that decision may be) can be rendered least prejudicial to the general well-being of your Majesty's Government."

He thus describes to Lord Granville the King's reception of his communication:

"I sent to his Majesty for his private perusal a copy of my letter to Mr. Plunket.

"He has returned it with thanks, describes it as 'admirable;' and though he does not (nor could I expect that he would) look beyond the next year for what must follow, there is not one word in his letter of determination not to yield, not a syllable of his royal brother's language, and not a shadow of ill-humour. This is well so far as it goes, and it is a great thing to have begun with his Majesty upon a subject which hitherto has been considered as interdicted ground.

"You remember, of course, that in the discussions (in Cabinet) which followed the loss of the question last session, I declared my determination to be no longer precluded from communicating with his Majesty when I thought fit."

The minister showed himself here rather too sanguine and credulous as to the King's disposition; indeed, it must be said that the latter was not called upon to do more than signify his approbation of the postponement, at which he might reasonably exclaim "Admirable!" without, too, exhibiting "a shadow of ill-humour." The proceeding was indeed one which recalled Pitt's and Fox's consideration for the feelings of his royal father on analogous occasions.

It is evident, however, that the King relied on their assurances that he was not to be annoyed by the Catholic question. But had Mr. Canning lived, it is clear he must have been obliged to bring forward the question. For the present it was staved off. He, however, had no objection to reciprocate these cordial advances, and contrived to turn them to profit.

Mr. Stapleton declares that from that day to Mr. Canning's death there was a most remarkable change in the King's behaviour, who became as cordial and loyal in his support as he was before unfriendly. The results were immediate. He even anticipated his wishes in regard to the recognised States.

"You will not think my journey to town fruitless," he wrote in October, "when I tell you that I received, the day before yesterday, from the King a note in which is the following sentence: 'The King will receive the ministers of the New States early in November.' Recollecting that this time twelvemonth it was a question whether there should be any New States at all, and that in the discussions of that day one of the main arguments employed to deter me from my purpose was, that the King would never be brought to receive their ministers, I think the two lines above quoted as satisfactory a proof of the sum as could be desired. I am afraid, however, that the King offers me more than I shall be able to take; for I have only one minister, that of Columbia, here. Immediately after the presentation I shall

appoint ministers to both States; and to this also I have obtained his Majesty's complete acquiescence. The King had now begun to feel, he said later, that 'I had not, as he was taught to apprehend, lost him his status among the Powers of the Continent,' but had only changed it from 'the tail of Europe to the head.'"

The presentation of the Columbian envoy was a special source of satisfaction to him. As "a scene" it is interesting, and a favourable specimen of Mr. Canning's spirited style.

"I had mentioned to his Majesty before Signor Hurtado came into the closet, that he had conducted himself eminently well during his residence of some years in England—had mixed himself in no factious cabal, nor, so far as I know and believe, in any dirty speculations.

"Immediately upon his coming in, the King, without waiting for his address, began with a sentence to this effect, extraordinarily well worded and pronounced.

"'I have learnt with great satisfaction, sir, that during your residence in this country you have conducted yourself with particular prudence and propriety, under very difficult circumstances. It is an earnest of the manner in which you will discharge the duties of the situation to which you are now appointed, and in which I have great pleasure in receiving you.'

"Hurtado then made his speech, which was a very judicious and proper one; though rather of the longest, and in the most unlicensed and arbitrary French which it is possible to imagine. (The King's speech to him was in English, which he understands, but does not venture to speak.)

"I then told the King (in the presence of Hurtado), that 'I had received from Hurtado the most positive assurances of the disposition and desire of his Government to cultivate the relations of peace with all the world, but especially with the New States of America, and especially, among them, with the State more immediately under his Majesty's protection—Brazil.'

"To which Hurtado bowed, and muttered his assent; and his Majesty added: 'I rejoice to hear it;' and turning to Hurtado, 'Peace, peace, by all means, and above all things. We have had thirty years of convulsions; let us all now conspire to keep the peace.'

"And so the audience ended. And so, behold! the New World established."

Another version of his proud boast of calling the New World into existence "to redress the balance of the Old!" What if we

could have foreseen the miserable little republics, which were in reality to be engendered by his bold step?

In December he had the satisfaction of witnessing Prince Esterhazy's farewell audience, which was to bring him fresh proof of his new-born favour with the King. He reports it in the same dramatic style:

"After many gracious expressions of regret, his Majesty said (in French) that it was particularly mortifying that Prince Esterhazy should leave England at such a time, when all was going on so well; when his Majesty's Government was so much to his own mind, and when he should think every other Power was so completely satisfied with it.

"Prince Esterhazy interposed a few words in confirmation of the King's sentiments, and expressive of his own satisfaction at the manner in which he was treated, especially by me. '*Que les formes avaient été toujours les plus amicales et qu'à present il était convaincu*——' and was evidently proceeding to some reference to former political differences of opinion between himself and me, when the King interrupted him, and said:

"'*Oui, oui—il faut être juste*;' and then turning to me, went on (still in French) to say—'Yes, it is right that you should know, and I am determined to tell you in his presence, that Esterhazy was the first "*de revenir sur votre compte,*" and to disavow and to complain of the unreasonable "preventions" of Prince Metternich. It is many months ago since Prince Esterhazy said to me, of his own accord, that he was ashamed for himself, and for his Court, of the injustice which had been done to you; and to express his conviction that, even on the points on which you had most differed, you had been right, and had done what was best for all.'

"'*Oui—je vous le jure,*' said Prince Esterhazy, holding out his hands and taking mine, and the tears coming into his eyes; and then turning to the King, he said: '*Sire, de toutes les graces dont votre Majesté m'a comblées*' (or words to that effect), "I consider this as the most kind. I wished Mr. Canning to know this, but I could not myself tell it him, or be sure that he would have given me credit for it if I had. How little could I expect your Majesty would have deigned to take the task upon yourself. *Oui, je vous jure,*' he repeated, turning to me, '*que même dans la question coloniale,* upon which it was my duty and that of others, according to our instructions, to oppose you all that we could, I have long been satisfied that you were entirely right; but still more upon the question which now occupies all our minds—I mean the Greek question.

"'I do confess, Sire,' he said to the King, 'I was, as we all

were, excessively dissatisfied with Mr. Canning for his constant refusal to join in the conferences at St. Petersburg, and did really and truly think that he was sacrificing the general good to his particular opinions; but I now assure your Majesty, upon my honour, that I am quite convinced that he judged the matter rightly from the beginning, and that he took the only course which, as a British minister, it was for the honour and interests of his country to take. *Moi-même dans sa situation et avec ses moyens*, I hope I should have acted like him. Indeed, Sire, events have proved how just a view he took of this subject. He foresaw the nullity of our conferences, and knew that he could not commit England in them without exposing her to discredit and impairing her utility in future.'

"The King said a few words implying assent, and I interposed, saying: 'Yes, Sire, in this country we cannot afford unprofitable discussions, or to take any public step, of which one knows beforehand that it will lead to no good.'

"'Yes,' said the King. 'When we see our way, and can employ our own influence, we can do anything. *Qui est ce*,' turning to Prince Esterhazy, '*qui pourroit avoir fait ce que nous venons d'accomplir au Brézil?*' Prince Esterhazy expressed his entire consent, and went into a panegyric of the instructions given to Sir Charles Stuart.

"'*Au moins*,' I said, '*Sire, nous avons sauvé là une monarchie*—which, as part of a confederacy, I would not answer for having been able to do.'

"The conversation then turned upon the Emperor of Russia's death; upon the danger of a Turkish war. The King expressing his determination to exert all his influence to preserve peace, and Prince Esterhazy expressing for himself and for his Court the perfect and entire confidence which (pointing to me) they reposed in his Majesty's Government.

"After Prince Esterhazy had taken leave, the King made me sit down, and repeated to me the conversation to which he had alluded in presence of Prince Esterhazy; and which, his Majesty said, had begun by a voluntary declaration on Prince Esterhazy's part of the error in which he had been for some time respecting the course of my policy, and of his complete abjuration of that error.

"The King said that Prince Metternich, though a very clever, was a very prejudiced man; that he had been used to have very much his own way; that poor Lord Londonderry had often found that however well Prince Metternich might have appeared to understand a subject relating to England in conversation, yet,

that three months after he got back to Vienna he appeared to have forgotten totally all that had passed, and said and did such things as put Lord Londonderry to great embarrassment; that his (the King's) wish had been to bring me and Metternich together; that he had proposed to him (Metternich) to come over from Paris for that purpose; that he would have introduced us to each other and shut us up in a room together, when in the course of an hour, he was sure, I should have convinced Metternich and brought him to reason.

"Referring to his majesty's expressions of regret at the loss of Prince Esterhazy, I offered to write privately to Sir H. Wellesley, to sound Metternich, whether the arrangement for his removal could be reconsidered; which the King commanded me to do.

"I asked whether his majesty's sentiments with respect to Count Lieven were the same, and the King answered: 'Certainly;' that his majesty wished I would do anything in my power to preserve Count Lieven in his present situation, for that with Lieven and Esterhazy I could manage everything.

"On leaving his majesty, I found Prince Esterhazy waiting for me in the outer room. He came up to me and repeated with emotion the substance of what he had said before the King; thanked me for my intention to write to Sir H. Wellesley, but expressed his belief that it would be of no avail; regretted his departure at a moment when it was so essential that Austria and England should understand each other; but conjured me to believe '*qu'il me rendit enfin pleine justice;*' and that he now comprehended and '*sçavoit apprécier ma politique,*' that I had everything in my hands, and was '*destiné à jouer le plus grand rôle en Europe.*'

"It is needless to add that we parted very good friends."

There seems no reason to doubt that this was the result of an intellectual victory, and that Mr. Canning had really gained one over the King. The latter, indeed, some years later, in conversation with Mr. Canning on Lord Liverpool's retirement, frankly assured him that this was so; and that his prejudices had been removed and his support gained by the brilliant results of the policy adopted, and the great position in Europe to which he had raised the country.*

* Stapleton, "Canning," p. 582.

THE KING TO SIR WILLIAM KNIGHTON.

"Royal Lodge, Nov. 15th, 1825.

"My dear Friend,

"I have so little to say since your departure from hence, that it is scarcely worth while troubling you with a line even now—especially as in the course of a few days I look for your reappearance—except to acknowledge and to thank you for the short epistle I received from you, dated Frankfort.

"Tranquillity, I am sure you will be pleased to learn, has in general been the order of the day since you left us. However, there have been, and I am fearful that they are still existing, some difficulties and misunderstandings in the final arrangement of that business which has caused you so much trouble and anxiety; and which at present do, and which I fear will still procrastinate the final adjustment until your return.

"It is impossible to detail to you what cavillings there have been, and what strange crotchets have started up, and sometimes seemingly upon the merest trifles, among the lawyers, and indeed, pretty much all the parties concerned; such immensity of talking backwards and forwards, here and there—the mistake of a sentence, and of even a single word—all which creates delays; and even if there be the possibility of correcting it and setting it to rights again afterwards, I think but little progress has yet been made; and I see the impracticability, and next to impossibility of its being brought to any final issue, until the moment of your return, when by your good and kind advice it may in all likelihood be ultimately settled.*

"You, I am confident, will understand all this without the necessity of any further explanation on my part, especially as they, I know, are at this very moment in the act of writing to you; so probably they may enter into some further details.

"As to bodily health, I am certainly not as well as I ought to be, although I complain but little, which you are well aware is generally the case with me; but as to that which is more and most essential (as it is the mainspring to everything, and the only security for health), the state of my mind and my feelings, I shall reserve all I have to say till next we meet.

"Now, then, God bless you, dear friend; and believe me always affectionately yours,

"G. R."

* This letter referred to the young Duke of Brunswick's affairs, of whom the King was guardian, and which brought his Majesty much trouble and litigation. This child grew up to be the well-known eccentric Charles Duke of Brunswick, whose strange life, chiefly conspicuous for diamonds, was closed by his strange legacy to the town of Geneva.

THE KING TO SIR WILLIAM KNIGHTON.

"Royal Lodge, Two o'clock P.M., Dec. 28th, 1825.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"I write a few lines in great haste to request that you will be with me here at an early hour to-morrow morning. You may depend upon it, that if it were not for matters of considerable moment, I would not break in upon the few moments of peaceful enjoyment with your family which you allow yourself, and it is therefore with sincere regret that I feel myself under the necessity of doing so upon the present occasion. However, you may assure Lady Knighton and your family from me, that four-and-twenty hours, I hope, will be the utmost extent of time of which they will be deprived of your society. The matter is too big with a variety and combination of matters not to require without the loss of a moment your presence, and your best advice and assistance. I have not time to add another word, but that I am always

"Affectionately yours,

"G. R."

CHAPTER XI.

1825—1826.

On the accession of the new Czar (the late Emperor Nicholas), it was proposed to send the Duke of Wellington to St. Petersburg to explain personally the views of the Government. The duke had been a little unwell, but otherwise there could be no objection to his setting out on so important and honourable a mission. The King, however, complicated so simple a matter by some fancied difficulties, and addressed to the duke what seems an apologetic letter:

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"[Most secret and confidential, and for yourself alone.]

"Royal Lodge, 27th December, 1825.

"My dear Friend,

"In consequence of an interview I have just had with Mr. Canning, I have determined upon sending you the enclosed letters, in hopes that they will reach you, before you can, or will, hear from Mr. Canning, and which I am confident that you will shortly. If upon reading my letter, you should not approve of it, the only apology I can offer is that which I am sure the generosity of your heart, and of your nature, will of itself naturally suggest to you for me, the sincerity and warmth of my most affectionate feelings towards you, which will, at all times, supersede every other consideration.

"I must in justice to Mr. Canning add, that every expression

he made use of was in a very friendly and proper tone. My fear was, that you might think that the proposal originated with me, and therefore that you might consider it as something in the shape of an official order, without any previous consultation on my part with you, my friend, as to that which might be agreeable to your feelings, and of which I do entreat you to believe I am wholly and entirely incapable.

"Mr. Canning's fear, on the other hand (from what I have just heard from him), seems to have arisen from this: the apprehension, that if this proposal was not in the very first instance made to you, you might possibly suppose that from some unjustifiable reason he had overlooked your superior consequence, pretentions, and ability; and therefore, he might be deemed as guilty of not showing towards you all that high consideration and respect, which are no more than your due; and which, as well as with private regard for you, he not only expresses himself, but appears to be strongly impressed.

"By the statement I have just made to you, you will perceive (when you receive Mr. Canning's communication) that the matter now stands on a perfectly different footing and principle than it did appear to me to do. When I wrote my answer to Mr. Canning's first letter, for now you will, if you please, consider it either as a matter of personal respect and compliment to yourself, or deal with it in any other way that may be most congenial and satisfactory to your own feelings; and it is upon this ground, and this ground alone, that I assented to Mr. Canning's approaching you at all upon the subject; and, after a further consultation with Lord Liverpool, to whom he is gone at Coombe, immediately upon leaving me. Advice I do not pretend to offer, but, as to my wishes, they are to be summed up in very few words indeed; and not to repeat all, I do so sincerely feel personally towards you, I must say that your absence for any length of time, or rather, the want of your presence, would be quite intolerable to me, besides the risk which your health would run, perhaps even your life, which is too frightful a consideration, either for the private man that loves you, or the public man that cares for his country, or for the interests of all Europe, to entertain or tolerate for a single instant.

"Believe me, my dear Duke,
"Ever your most affectionate Friend,
"G. R.

"P.S.—When you have done with Canning's letter, as well as with the copy of my answer, I will thank you to return them."

From Mr. Canning's account of this simple transaction, it

will be seen that, with his usual love of tortuous ways, even in trifles, the King's letter had been addressed to the Duke without Mr. Canning's knowledge—hence "for yourself alone."

"I proposed it to the King almost as soon as the event was known; but his majesty doubted—solely, however, on the ground of the duke's health. I persuaded his majesty to let me try the question upon the duke, with an express intimation of his majesty's commands that he should not undertake the mission, unless he felt himself strong enough to go through with it, and unless his medical advisers concurred in the same opinion. The duke not only accepted, but jumped, as I foresaw that he would, at the proposal. 'Never better in his life,' 'ready to set out in a week,' and the like expressions of alertness, leave no doubt upon my mind that the selection of another person would have done his health more prejudice than all the frosts or thaws of the hyperborean regions can do it."

As the reader will have seen, it is not proposed in this work to give a complete view of ministerial changes and politics during this reign, which would be entering on a vast field, but simply to deal with these matters only so far as they exhibit the behaviour of his majesty.

THE KING TO SIR W. KNIGHTON.

"January, 1826.

"Dear Friend,

"Many thanks to you for your letter, just received. Inclosed, and unsealed, I send you a short note of thanks for Robinson, which, after you have read, you will be so good as to seal and forward to him. Cathcart's paper I also return you, properly signed.

"With respect to Munster's re-despatching the quarterly messenger to Hanover on the 25th of this month, as he proposes, I can only say at present, that he may prepare him eventually for such departure, if such things as I shall have to send abroad by him shall be ready (and which I hope they will by that day), but that, should they not, he must positively await my further orders. Amongst the rest of the articles which I shall have to send by him are the complete set of Handel's scores and works for the King of Prussia, now binding, which I must beg of you to look after, and to see yourself carefully, properly, and safely packed up, and then to be simply addressed, '*Pour Sa Majesté le Roi de Prusse*;' and the outward cover, 'For H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland, K.G., Berlin.'

"With your usual precaution, celerity, and zeal, you seem to have carried, and settled to my entire comfort and satisfaction, all the necessary and essential points respecting Windsor Castle and the King's palace, as well as what to me is almost equally agreeable (as you state it) to the quietude and gratification of poor little Nash's feelings.

"A little charitable impulse induces me to desire you to inquire into the distressed circumstances of poor old O'Keeffe, now ninety years of age and stone-blind, whom I knew a little of formerly, having occasionally met him at parties; my juvenile recreation and hilarity to which he then contributed not a little. Should you really find him so low in the world, and so divested of all comfort as he is represented to be, then I do conceive that there can be no objection to your offering him, from me, such immediate relief, or such a moderate annual stipend, as will enable him to close his hitherto long life in comfort, at any rate free from want and absolute beggary, which I greatly fear at present is but too truly his actual condition and situation. Perhaps on many accounts and reasons, which I am sure I need not mention to you, this had best be effectuated by an immediate application through you to our lively little friend G. Colman, whose good heart will, I am certain, lead him to give us all the assistance he can, especially as it is for the preservation of one of his oldest invalided brothers and worshippers of the Thespian muse.

"G. R."

THE KING TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

"[Most private.]

"Royal Lodge, April 19th, 1826.

"I think your explanation on the subject of the Northumberland peerage, although not satisfactory to one's feelings, is upon the whole conclusive; but I do think that it is a hard thing, both upon you and me, that Lord Grenville should make a point of driving me to do that which I think wrong, and take no interest in, politically or otherwise. However, let it be, for I do not choose that you should be compromised. All the others that you have put down have my entire approbation. I will now add my own; and I shall begin by naming my friend Charles Long; the second, about whom I am even more anxious, is my old and attached friend Lord Fife. I am quite aware of the trifling objection to some of the fooleries of his past life, but who is exempt from some nonsense or other? I dismissed him from my household, and used him apparently ill to please my Government and poor Lord Londonderry; but, notwithstanding this,

my friend Fife never gave a vote against the Government afterwards, and by his loyal example when I was in Scotland did the greatest good. I am much attached to him. If you choose to let Sir John Leicester stand, I have no objection; and with this understanding, that I shall be willing to consider myself as owing you a peer at any future period that you may propose. Peace and harmony is my great object. You will be glad, I am sure, to learn that I am gradually improving in health every day.

"Your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, October 7th, 1826.

"The King has read with attention the papers transmitted to him by the Duke of Wellington, and which he now returns.

"The King is entirely of the same opinion as the Duke of Wellington with regard to the propriety of the second condition proposed by Mr. Canning.

"The King doubts Marshal Beresford's acceptance of the command of the Portuguese army, if hampered with the first condition; and therefore, if Mr. Canning considers it is of great importance that the command should be taken by Lord Beresford, probably Mr. Canning will reconsider the first proposition.

"The King desires that the Duke of Wellington will communicate the contents of this letter to Mr. Canning and Lord Liverpool.

"G. R."

THE KING TO THE SAME.

"My dear Friend,

"I add this short note, merely for yourself, to tell you that I am quite of your opinion on this matter. The first proposition cannot be flattering to the feelings of Lord Beresford; nor do I think in a political view it would be a dignified measure for us to take.

"Yours very affectionately,
"G. R."

THE KING TO SIR W. KNIGHTON.

"Royal Lodge, Dec. 30, 1826.

Dear Friend,

"I write a short line, merely for the purpose of wishing you and yours from my heart a happy new year, and many

returns of the same. I shall trouble you with but little on the present occasion, though I have much, and that too of great importance, which I must with the shortest lapse of time possible discuss and talk over with you; and therefore I rely upon your affection for me that you will not disappoint me, but that you will be punctual with me at the Lodge by noon, and not later than on Wednesday the 2nd, by which time I trust the old mansion will be completely restored to its wonted tranquillity and quiet. But see you I must on that day.

"It was fully my intention to have written you a few lines on Christmas Day, but I was then, and had been confined ever since this day se'ennight, to my room with a general cold and feverish attack, attended with great tightness and oppression upon the chest, and for which, by Sir Henry's advice, we were obliged to have recourse to the lancet, which produced the expected relief, but not such entire relief as to set me free from my chamber, but from which, thank God, I am to emerge this day, by going down to dinner for the first time. My affection for you made me feel that, however I might be suffering myself, it would be both cruel and unjust in me, knowing how very little time you ever allow yourself to pass in comfort with your family (especially at this season of the year), were I to write that to you which, from your affection to me, might have induced you generously to break up your domestic board by coming away to me suddenly, or at any rate have cast a damper over those happy, cheerful, and enviable hours, which you cannot fail to enjoy when surrounded by your happy domestic circle; and that long may this be your case, dear friend, my best prayers are, and ever will be offered up.

"Now good-bye to you. I look forward with impatience to Wednesday next, the 2nd, when I rely and depend upon seeing you. Till then, God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,
"G. R."

In the January of 1827 the royal Protestant champion, the Duke of York, was taken ill and died—a great loss to his majesty. He had been giving much trouble to Mr. Canning, owing to his interference; and not long before his death he had exhorted the King "strenuously to place the Government of the country in a state of uniformity, and that that uniformity should be one of a decided opposition to the Catholic claims." The King, however, was not prepared to take his advice; but Mr. Canning was actually meditating taking some serious step to put a stop to his interference. He congratulated him-

self that he had not done so. But still in death the duke was destined to help the cause he loved, for it was on attending his funeral that Mr. Canning caught the fatal cold that carried him off.

Of a sudden came the catastrophe of Lord Liverpool's seizure and subsequent death; which led to a crisis of singular embarrassment for all concerned.

CHAPTER XII.

1827.

On March 27th Mr. Canning went down to the Royal Lodge, to hold one of those long conversations in which the King was fond of indulging in his last years, and which rather took the shape of monologues, in which he rambled from topic to topic, but chiefly dwelt upon himself, and his life and principles. These views often astonished and confounded the listener, owing to their inconsistency with the real course of events. "The King gave him the whole history of his political opinions, both before as well as after he became Regent, and subsequently King, especially with reference to what they had been, and then were, on the Catholic question. He stated that on that point, even at the time of his closest connection with Mr. Fox, his opinions had been against concession, and, in short, that he was decidedly opposed to emancipation. His majesty's expressions were very strong on this subject. His majesty expressed, in the most unequivocal terms, his satisfaction with Mr. Canning's services, and his wish to retain them for the rest of his life; but, he added, that as the Catholic question was a matter of conscience, he must take great precautions against exposing himself to the imputation of abandoning his opinions on that question, which he feared he would do if he were to select a Catholic Prime Minister. He therefore wished to retain all his present ministers, and to fill up Lord Liverpool's place with some peer holding Lord Liverpool's opinions upon the Catholic question.

"Mr. Canning said that the first advice which, as an honest man, he was bound to tender to him was, that his majesty should form a Government calculated to represent his own opinions. The King thought that was impossible, and cited Lord Liverpool's

opinions to that effect upon the Duke of York's paper of November last. Mr. Canning observed that he did not agree in that opinion; but that it was not, however, his business to point out the mode in which such a Government might be formed, but all he could do was to lay his office at his majesty's feet, in order that the attempt might be made.

"His majesty then declared his sense of the impossibility of parting with Mr. Canning, and repeated his assurances that the repugnance with which he frankly admitted he had received Mr. Canning into his service in 1822 had not only been completely effaced within a short time after their coming together, but was now changed into sentiments of satisfaction, regard, and warm affection; that Mr. Canning had placed this country in a position, with respect to Europe, in which it had never stood before; that the maintenance of the country in that situation depended upon Mr. Canning's continuance in office, on the personal consideration which was placed in him by foreign Courts, and on their knowledge that his majesty completely approved and adopted Mr. Canning's system.

"Mr. Canning answered with becoming expressions of gratitude, but asked whether his majesty wished him to speak his mind freely, otherwise he had sufficiently discharged his duty in advising his majesty to form an exclusively anti-Catholic Government. His majesty repeated that that was impossible, and desired Mr. Canning to go on. Mr. Canning then said, in obedience to his majesty's commands, that he would speak without reserve. After declaring that he could not alter his views on the Catholic question, his majesty must permit him to say that it was not just to change that footing without previous warning, and that it was obviously unjust to do so without giving each minister, who had entered his service upon the faith that the footing was unchanged, permission to retire without incurring his majesty's displeasure; that if the proposition made to Mr. Canning was either to conform to a new footing on this subject, or retire, he should not complain. He could only say that, if he remained in the Government, it must be to act as he had hitherto acted upon the Catholic question, whenever the discussion of it occurred.

"That most happy should he be, if, by any fair management or reasonable compromise, he could contrive to spare his majesty's feelings, or, to use a word which his majesty had employed, to protect him from the vexation which he had experienced in the annual agitation of this painful question; but that, in order to do this, Mr. Canning must be free as air with respect to the question; that he could give his majesty no pledges of any kind respecting it.

"His majesty graciously admitted the reasonableness of this view of the subject; but then, reverting to his own feeling upon the Catholic question, asked what he should be able to say to those who relied upon his majesty's firmness for the maintenance of the Protestant cause, if he were to name what would be called a Catholic Prime Minister?

"The other replied that 'as the Catholic question was an open question on which the members of the Government were free to act according to their opinions, without entailing any disadvantageous consequence upon themselves, how could he allow it to be proved in his person, that those whose sentiments were favourable to the Roman Catholics were to be excluded solely on account of those sentiments, as much as the Catholics, from the highest elevations in the State and from the greatest objects of ambition?'

"He could not, therefore, consent that, in his person, such a principle should be established; and he felt bound honestly to tell his majesty, in plain terms, that the substantive power of First Minister he must have, and what is more, must be known to have, or he must beg leave to be allowed to retire from a situation which he could not longer fill, either with satisfaction to himself or with benefit to the King's service."

The result of this conversation is embodied in the following "corrected minute:"

"Minute of what was said to me by the King at the Royal Lodge, March 21, 1827. Read by me to his majesty March 29, and corrected in his majesty's presence.

"G. C."

"For the Cabinet,

"That his majesty is desirous of retaining all his present servants in the stations which they at present fill; placing at their head, in the station vacated by Lord Liverpool, some peer professing opinions, upon whom his majesty's confidential servants may agree, of the same principles as Lord Liverpool."

It was thought advisable, however, not to present this view to the Cabinet, so matters remained exactly as they were for more than a week. Mr. Peel and the duke had interviews with his majesty later.*

* Mr. Greville learned from Lady Bathurst: "When the account of Lord Liverpool's seizure reached the King at Brighton, Peel was at the Pavilion; the King got into one of his nervous ways, and sent for him in the middle of the night, desiring he would not dress; so he went down in his bed-

It would take too long to set out the difficulties of the imbroglio that followed. They could be anticipated, when it is considered that the elements were a Tory Cabinet, deprived of its chief, and expected to enlist under "a Catholic Premier." These ministers were willing to take service under anyone who corresponded to the type of the late Premier—that is, a "Protestant"—and was content to leave the question an "open one." They expected that the Duke of Wellington would answer this description; on the other hand, the claims of Mr. Canning were conspicuous for his commanding abilities. Neither party, it was clear, wished to bring the matter to this distinct issue. Mr. Canning had many interviews with both Mr. Peel and the duke, which were reported to have brought "the greatest satisfaction to the parties," but nothing came of it. During these interviews, however, Mr. Canning came at last to believe that what was in the duke's mind was, that he, the duke, should be Premier; which might have been confirmed by Mr. Peel's actually making the suggestion. But the public growing impatient at the delay, the King found himself obliged, on April 10th, to give formal commission to Mr. Canning to form a ministry.

He accordingly applied to the members of the late Cabinet, who nearly all declined; while the Duke of Wellington, with something that seemed like insolence, inquired in reply: "Who was to be head of the Government?" He was deeply offended at the tone of the rather sharp answer he received, and resigned his office at the head of the army. But it is with the King's behaviour we are most interested; who, in the crisis appears to have passed through all the stages of indecision, cunning, revolt, advances, and concession. He could not endure to have a Catholic Premier, and yet he knew what worry and annoyance were in store for him if he rejected him. He dreaded facing his "Protestant" friends, the Eldons and others, who used to support him with comforting ascendency doctrines, and to whom he would pour out his valiant assurances of resistance. He felt, too, the genius and fascination of Canning, who, like Lord Wellesley, used to kindle his regal ardour, by grand schemes that would bring glory to his reign.

But he himself shall presently unfold his own views in his own characteristic style.

gown and sat by the side of the King's bed. Peel has got an awkward way of thrusting out his hands while he talks, which at length provoked the King so much that he said: 'Mr. Peel, it is no use going on so (taking him off) thrusting out your arms. The question is, who is to be my minister?"

THE KING TO SIR WILLIAM KNIGHTON.

"St. James's Palace, Friday, April 6th, 1827.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"For God's sake, for all our sakes, pray, pray take care of yourself, and do not think, upon any account, of stirring until to-morrow morning. It is true, I am jaded and quite worn out, and writing from my bed, where I have laid down for a little rest; but to-morrow will be quite time enough. Little or no advance, I regret to say, has as yet been made, amidst, perhaps, almost unravelable perplexities.

"Yours affectionately,

"G. R."

At this crisis the Duke of Buckingham, then struggling with difficulties, and going abroad on a yacht voyage, with a view to retrenchment, was passing through London, and determined to see and fortify his sovereign by offers of support. This rather singular nobleman had been fatiguing his political friends by a long course of querulous demands for place and advancement; and the publication of the voluminous family papers has helped us to see in what estimation he was held by his contemporaries.*

Not obtaining the Governorship of India, which he hoped for, he appears to have conceived the idea of attaching himself to the King, as to a party. The interview that followed is so characteristic of his majesty, and his views at this crisis are so freely delivered, that it is worth giving here at length.

"On the 13th I went to the King, according to appointment, and was received most graciously. He made me sit down, and I had an audience of near three hours. He had kept me waiting, owing to some boxes arriving from London. He therefore sent the Lord Steward to entertain me, offer me refreshments, etc. I began by asking him about his own health. He is much altered and aged, walked but feebly, but still without assistance, but complained of his knees. This conversation related at first to his own health, and to that of his old companions in the gout, Lord Forester and others.

"He then exclaimed: 'Ah! these are indeed strange times, and it is a strange political atmosphere which we are breathing.'

* There are some curious particulars reported by Mr. Greville, and which he gathered from the duke's friend, Arbuthnot—such as the King's declaration to the duke, "that if the Tories would not agree to his (Canning) being Prime Minister, he was sure of the Whigs." But this is inconsistent with Mr. Canning's account, or it was probably due to the imagination of the King.

"I replied: 'So strange, sir, that I cannot breathe it, and I retire to avoid it.'

"He then, hardly allowing me to say a word, entered himself into a detail, for two hours uninterruptedly, of the whole circumstances attending the late change, and most clearly made out a story against Peel and the Duke of Wellington, the truth of which I cannot doubt, and which perfectly surprised me. The King, on the political 'smash' of the Ministry, urged the Government to hold together, and to choose someone—he cared not who, Protestant or Catholic—to recommend as Prime Minister. That, of course, he could not admit the situation to be elective; but that if they would name anyone that would hold them together on the principles of Lord Liverpool's Government, that man should be his minister. Twice he saw the Duke of Wellington, and twice said the same thing to him, urging them to unite—and twice the Duke of Wellington declined himself suggesting any person, specially saying that he could not be his minister, that he had gained all he wished for, more than he had hoped for—that he had been bred up amongst camps and armies, that all his political views had arisen out of, or had been secondary, to his military proceedings, and therefore that he could not be his minister; that as to a purely Protestant Government, it could not be made. The King suggested several names—Bexley, Bathurst, etc. etc. Why not make them sticks to rally round? No, they would name nobody, and the Duke of Wellington persevered in excluding himself. At last Peel, who had kept a very high and mighty bearing, declared himself ready to meet Canning upon the subject; and after their meeting, Peel wrote to the King to say that one had been suggested, but that he would wait upon the King, as he did not like to put the name in writing. In the meanwhile several delays occasioned by Peel intervened, and at last after Tierney had declared that he would ask a question in the House of Commons about the Government—that he must do so to keep it out of other hands—Peel came to the King and thundered out the Duke of Wellington's name.

"The King, having been refused twice by the duke himself, and having under that refusal announced that he was not to be the man, said he would not then, in the last moment, in the eleventh hour, have a man crammed down his throat; declined the duke, and suggested any other; and then upon, for the first time, a refusal being given to act with Canning, refused the Duke of Wellington, named Canning, and then the resignation took place—the Duke of Wellington leading the way, because his own suggestion had been adopted; and he followed it up by throwing at the King's head the whole of his employments,

military and all. The King begged him to keep the army. No—all or nothing! Now, the duke had an entire right to say that he was the fittest man to be minister, and the only one to keep parties together. But he had no right to protest until the last moment that he would not be the man, and then employ that last moment in putting the pistol loaded with his own name to the King's head.

"Now, as to the Whigs, I asked him if he had any hope that they would stand steadily by him on what both he and I considered the best interests of his country?

"The King's answer was: '*Alors, comme alors.*'

"I then asked him whether he did not see that the Whigs would pledge him much closer to the carrying of that question, the Catholic, than any other public body would? His answer was: '*Alors, comme alors!* Canning has pledged himself never to press me upon that subject, and never to be a member of the Cabinet that does!'

"I begged to have that repeated to me, that I might be sure of the fact. The King repeated it, and then said: 'As yet he has kept his word, and I think he will go on and do so; but, by God, the moment he changes his line, he goes—and, of course, I look only to my Prime Minister. It is his business to complete his Administration upon the same principles on which he himself consents to form it, and it is no business of mine to look further.'

"What assistance, I said, could he look to from the Whigs?

"He replied: 'I cannot help it; you may be sure I cannot forget the past. But where else could I go? I did all I could short of making the situation of Premier elective. I offered to take anyone whom they would name, Protestant or Catholic, provided I could have kept the thing together. Canning from the beginning was ready to undertake the task. I told them so. They expressed no feeling against him personally at first. I only asked them to name—they declined. I must have a minister; the Opposition threatened to storm my citadel. I again urged them. They again refused, and in the last moment, when they saw that I was driven to the wall, they pressed upon me the very name which they and the individual himself had repeatedly declared was the only name that could not and ought not to be put forward! I then had no resource but to direct Canning to write the note to the Duke of Wellington, which you saw, and all the occurrences which you are aware of followed. If it is the great devil that has been forced upon me, it is they who have done it. I did not want Canning in the Government upon Castlereagh's death, but they forced him upon me. Now they wanted in the same way to force Wellington; but I am, at least, some-

body in the State, and have shown them that I will not be bullied. The future must take care of itself. Now, as to the Opposition, the Corn Bill has held it together; but draw the Catholic question round it, and what becomes of it? Like a salamander, it must expire, surrounded by its own fire.'

"The King expressed much indignation against Lord Mansfield, who had accused him in the House of Lords of having changed his opinion on the Catholic question.

"'He lied. Had I been an individual I would have told him so and fought him. As it was, I put the Archbishop of Canterbury in a fright by sending him as my second to Mansfield, to tell him he lied. The archbishop came down bustling here to know what he was to do? So said I: "Go and do my bidding—tell him he lies, and kick his behind in my name!"'"

We may accept the perfect accuracy of this amusing scene, for the duke was a diligent and painstaking reporter. It offers a good vindication of the Duke of Wellington, and shows that he had then no wish for office.*

To the Duke of Newcastle, who came to warn him, he was loud in professions of stanch orthodoxy; made a valiant display, "entered at great length into the whole history of the Roman Catholics from the reign of James II. down to the present time, professed himself a Protestant heart and soul." He declared he never would give his assent to any measures for Roman Catholic Emancipation. And, when pressed by the duke as to the new form of his Administration, he assured the duke "that the First Minister should be for the Protestant side of the question," and as to Ireland, that the Chancellor there should be Protestant also. He added that the present audience would be necessarily known to everybody; but "he must keep faith with his ministers." He said "the courage of his family had never been questioned." When assured that, in choosing Protestants for his ministers, his choice would be supported by a large and powerful body of peers, and pressed for an assurance that his choice would be made accordingly, he said, again and again: "Do you doubt me? But it is not I who fail in my duty. It is you in Parliament. Why do you suffer the d——d Association in Dublin?" The King's sentiments were strongly expressed, but

* In his defence in the House of Lords he said: "But it has been stated that I withdrew myself because his majesty would not submit to my dictation and threats, in case I should not myself be appointed his minister; and this accusation is most curiously coupled with another, namely, that his majesty offered to make me his minister, and that I refused. My lords, those know but little of his majesty who suppose that any man can dare to dictate to him, much less to threaten him. My lords, his majesty never offered to me to make me his minister."

there was reason to apprehend that considerations of ease and repose might outweigh his principles.

The duke told the King plainly that the support or opposition of himself, and of those for whom he was acting, would depend on the choice that the King should finally make in forming his Administration.

The Archbishop of Canterbury he had already entertained in the same way on the 14th of March, for six hours, from two till eight. Here he was still more earnest, going back to Mr. Fox's time, and that of "the Talents." In this discourse he exhibits some of the curious delusions into which he had persuaded himself, viz. that of having been a devoted son. He had induced Mr. Fox not to bring forward the Catholic question to disturb his father, who would never consent, nor would he, if the crown descended to him. "When the Grenvilles were dismissed in 1807, it was he that had given early notice of the pro-Catholic scheme to his father," etc. As to the new Government, he particularly mentioned, as to the coronation oath, that he had told Lord Castlereagh previously to his own coronation, that if they meant he should ever consent to Roman Catholic Emancipation, they must alter the coronation oath before he was crowned; for after taking that he would, like his father, sooner consent to lay his head on the block than consent to that measure. The King then desired the archbishop to write immediately to Lord Manners, begging, as a personal request from the King, that he would stay out the year, so as to give time for finding another Protestant Chancellor of Ireland, for he would have a Protestant Lord Lieutenant also, and a Protestant Chief Secretary. The archbishop accordingly had written to, and had received a letter from, Lord Manners, consenting to remain till October. Yet he complained of the Duke of Wellington, declaring that he had agreed to accept with Canning. In his Protestant principles "he was even more immovably fixed than his father was," and when Mr. Peel told him there were no materials for a Protestant Government, he said: "Then it must be a neutral Cabinet. Mr. Canning is forced upon me; but I will have a Protestant Lord Lieutenant," etc. This latter declaration he made to all sorts of persons, and he bade the archbishop tell it "to all the bishops, and all the world."

Mr. Canning was finally installed, but his rule was only to be for a brief period, offering a curious parallel to the case of Mr. Fox. According to the Duke of Wellington's account, he had decided the King's vacillation in rather summary fashion, taking out his watch and requiring him to make up his mind within a quarter of an hour. The duke himself later found this

mode very effectual with his majesty. The King, however, felt unbounded confidence in his new minister, whose talents would protect him from annoyance, especially on the great question of Catholic Relief, which he had the assurance of his minister would not be forced on. A curious incident is connected with this matter by Mr. Jerdan, who by a strange accident was enabled to confirm to Mr. Canning whatever hopes he may have founded on the King's ardent assurances of support. A friend of his, Mr. Hunt, connected with the Board of Works, was engaged at the palace on the alterations the very day on which Mr. Canning was appointed minister. "By a strange casualty, when he left off his inspection of the innermost apartment, and was on his way out, he discovered to his dismay that his majesty had retired from his meeting with Mr. Canning, and come, with the Marchioness of Conyngham, into the room immediately adjoining that in which he was. Retreat was impossible. Bathed in perspiration, as he described himself to me, he was thus compelled, perforce, to overhear the conversation between the King and his confidante on this important occasion; and thence the particulars of his majesty's interview with the minister, the expression of his confidence in his genius and loyalty, and his firm persuasion that he would conduct the affairs of the kingdom to the heights of prosperity and glory; in all which sentiments the accomplished marchioness cordially agreed, and warmly applauded the act by which numerous political ravels seemed to be so happily disentangled. To Hunt's infinite relief, the colloquy ended, and the suite of rooms was cleared for his joyous escape." Mr. Jerdan hurried to Mr. Canning with this news, which was received with the most genuine satisfaction.

One of the first necessary results was the real retirement of the always retiring Eldon.

"I took my final leave of office on Monday May 2nd, 1827. The King, to me personally, behaved with kindness and feeling. He sent for me on the Sunday, as he said he could not prevail upon himself to part with me, having only the short interview, which the hurry of Monday, when the whole change was to be made, would admit. His conversation to me was very kind certainly, and it discovered a heart that had such affectionate feelings as one cannot but deeply lament should, from intrigue and undue influence, not be left to its own operations upon the head."

Such was the *congé* of this veteran placeman. Within a year or two more his enthusiasm for his sovereign was to be a good deal abated.

CHAPTER XIII.

1827.

On the resignation of the Tory members of the Cabinet the duke resigned the command of the army in a pet, having found an excuse in what he considered "the want of confidence, respect, and even common civility" with which he had been treated by Mr. Canning. This was most inconvenient for the new Government, for it was felt that the office would lose its prestige if entrusted to anyone else while such a man remained unemployed; in fact, the feeling of the country would be that ministers should restore him, even at the expense of any *amende* that might be necessary. But the King had no such misgivings, for, with a light heart, he had resolved upon his favourite scheme of taking the command of the army himself, on the ground that it was properly his, from the fact of signing commissions! Sir H. Taylor was informed of this proposed step by Sir W. Knighton and Mr. Canning, much to his alarm and annoyance. He was to remain as Adjutant-General. On his objecting, the King himself explained to him that it was impossible to entrust the office to any of the royal family, and that the general in Ireland could not be spared. The Adjutant, however, impressed on him the serious nature of the step, and its unconstitutional character, on which the King gave way. But he, with needless pathos, "called on him, as the person who had been the confidential attendant of his blind father, and the attendant on his brother to the hour of his death, to take this situation; that he had long wished to have him about him; that he laid his commands on him," etc. But it was felt, however, that the duke should be brought back with all speed, and it was pressed on him that he ought to reconsider the

matter. The duke, however, took his ground and kept it firmly. He had been insulted, and the *amende* must come from the other side. "It remains for his majesty," he wrote to a friend, "to decide whether I was mistaken in the view I took." This was shown to Mr. Canning on May 21, who soon got the King to write.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"St. James's Palace, May 21st, 1827.

"My dear Friend,

"I learn from my Government, as well as from other quarters, that you have obligingly expressed your readiness to afford your advice upon any matters of military importance or detail that might occur. These circumstances renew in me those feelings towards you which God knows (as you must know) I have so long and so sincerely felt, and I hope on all occasions proved—at least it was my intention so to do. I cannot refrain, therefore, from acquainting you that the command of the army is still open, and if you choose to recall that resignation which it grieved me so much to receive, you have my sincere permission to do so.

"Ever your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

To this soothing appeal the duke replied that he could not claim the merit of making any communication to the Government. He had served the King and his father forty-two years, and he was willing of course to give any advice if consulted, but he declined to recall his resignation. Even here he fancied he saw the craft of Mr. Canning, for, in a letter to the Duke of Cumberland, he accuses him of suppressing this portion of his letter, when urging the King to write. He required an apology. The King, however, determined to make another trial, and expressed his surprise to Lord Maryborough that the duke had never come down to see him. The duke declined to go until commanded. On this he was invited, and spent three hours at Windsor. The King was gracious and effusive, but the duke was reserved and dry. "The King went over," says the latter, "the whole story of the change of ministry in his own way; in answer to which I told him that *I thought I recollected some circumstances as having occurred in a manner different from that in which his majesty had stated that they had occurred, and of others I had no knowledge,* and that I recollected others which his majesty had not mentioned, but that upon the whole I thought it best not to enter upon that discussion." The passage in italics is amusing, and shows the

duke's quiet mode of dealing with the ebullitions of his royal master. In this interview the duke believed he had discovered that the King had been determined at all hazards and all through to take Mr. Canning. He saw, too, that the latter's influence was stronger than ever.

The visit, however, did not bring any profit, but the visitor was amazed to find that the *camarilla* immediately gave out that he had come of his own motion and uninvited! "My opinion," he wrote to Lord Bathurst, in strong language, "respecting the King's conduct is this. He wished to see me so as to have a resource in case of an evil day; and likewise, if he could, to coax me into taking the command back again without requiring any concession from Mr. Canning. But when he found the last failed, he misrepresented to Mr. Canning the mode in which I had been prevailed upon to visit the Lodge." The King's letter, thus alluded to, may be given as the conclusion to this unique piece of strategy. The reader will note the passages I have put in italics.

THE KING TO MR. CANNING.

"[Private.]

"Royal Lodge, Thursday, half-past two P.M.,
July 19, 1827.

"DEAR MR. CANNING,

"I delay not a moment in acquainting you with a circumstance that has just occurred very *unexpectedly* to me—a visit from the Duke of Wellington. *I can only attribute this visit to its being the anniversary of my coronation.* Our interview was not long, and our conversation for the most part was on general topics. *Of course it was impossible here and there, occasionally, not to have some reference to matters which have recently occurred.* I found the duke extremely temperate, but I could easily perceive, from little expressions which now and then dropped, that the most assiduous pains have been taken, and are still actively employed, to give the strongest jaundiced complexion to the past, as well as the present state of things, and to keep up, if not to widen as much as malice and wickedness can contrive it, the breach which exists between him and my Government. I sincerely hope that you are rapidly recovering from the odious lumbago.

"Believe me always,
"Your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

Mr. Canning was destined to enjoy this plenitude of power scarcely two months. He had long been ill, borne down with

overwork and disease. Many had been struck by the change in his appearance—his "wasted look." At the Duke of York's funeral in January, as we have seen, he had caught a cold, which the venerable Eldon had escaped by judiciously putting his hat under his feet to save himself from the chill of the flags. Mr. Greville had seen him at Windsor in the middle of June, when he looked dreadfully ill. A few days before his death he was again with the King, who spoke to him about his looks, when he replied that "he did not know what was the matter with him—he was ill all over." On the first of August he took to his bed.

"When the physicians saw him," says his secretary, "he was in pain, and exclaimed: 'My God! my God!' Dr. Farre observed: 'You do right, sir, to call upon your God. I hope that you pray to Him yourself in secret.' 'I do, I do,' was his answer. And you ask,' added the doctor, 'for mercy and salvation through the merits of your Redeemer?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'I do, through the merits of Jesus Christ.' The doctor then asked if he had anything to say about his country, but it was feared that the question might excite him, and the subject was dropped. In the course of the evening he said to Sir W. Knighton: 'This may be hard upon me, but it is still harder upon the King.' August 8.—Went to his room at three in the morning; he was quite unconscious. . . Sir M. Tierney felt his pulse, thought for a second that he was gone, but he still breathed. In a few minutes there ceased to be any signs of breathing. He passed away so quietly that the exact moment could not be ascertained, but it was between twelve and ten minutes before four."

Thousands assembled at his gates, deploring the death of this high-spirited minister. There is something pathetic and unselfish in his speech to Sir W. Knighton, that "it was harder upon the King," whose troubles were now to recommence.

His colleagues, Mr. Greville says, were in despair, as well they might be, for it was not so much the signal for the destruction of the Cabinet, as for the commencement of moribund agonies which were to be protracted to their own discredit. The master spirit was gone, there was no one left to control the King, and the short-lived Goderich Ministry was formed, consisting of fragments of both parties. Yet this death was really the signal for Emancipation. It was naturally believed that the King would deal with the Cabinet summarily, and consult his "feelings" in sending for a Protestant premier, such as was the Duke of Wellington. For this he had made that stout and persevering contention when the last ministry was in power. The Duke of Wellington fancied "there was going to be another scene of

confusion." It, however, now appeared that the King was full of affection for the memory of Mr. Canning, and professed to wish to carry on his arrangements. At the same time, from his peculiar disposition, he was delighted at the opening offered to him for petty intrigue, and for playing off one party of the ministry against the other. Lord Goderich was weak and easily overborne, and the King generally viewing matters from the view of his *personnel*, was eager for his appointment.

The behaviour of the King in this transaction was characteristic. He had conceived a violent desire for having Mr. Herries in the ministry as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and this scheme he pressed with an extraordinary persistence. As we learn from a recently-published memoir of that statesman, the Whigs were eagerly pressing for the introduction of some of their own party, and the weak Lord Goderich was unable either to resist them or the King. The post was formally offered to Herries through Sir W. Knighton, but he saw that the Premier wished that he should not accept it, and was himself disinclined, owing to bad health. He however repaired to Windsor; where, as he says, "the scene that took place would fill a volume." While he was waiting, the Whigs, he said, contrived to work on Lord Goderich, who came to implore him to decline the post, if he could do so. When he went in to the King, the latter enlarged on the situation for an hour, declared he would not be dictated to, and actually put the seals into his hand. The latter referred him to the minister, who entered in his turn, and persuaded the King to postpone the matter. Mr. Herries was naturally mortified at this treatment, but was induced once more to repair to Windsor with some of the ministers; when a conversation four hours long took place, and the King, in a speech of an hour and a half, explained his views and dwelt on "his feelings." He would not compromise, he said, his own just authority. There were two conditions he would hold by, "the maintenance of his own honour, and my character." Such was his pertinacity, that Mr. Herries was at last induced to accept. Now it is but too evident that his majesty must have been thus eager, not so much on account of the public interest, as for some personal object. There are a number of other instances in which he was equally pertinacious, and when the motives were strictly personal. Lord Palmerston, Mr. Greville, and others, not unreasonably imputed it to a wish to have an officer at the Exchequer who would be tolerant of his own demands; not that Mr. Herries was likely to be so, but his confidential intimacy with Knighton, and frequent conversations with the King, might fairly encourage such a belief. Further, we find Herries later appointed to direct

the expenditure on the palaces, and pressing on the works. He may not "have got odds and ends out of the *droits*," which his son indignantly denies; but it must be remembered that many of the royal family had been assisted with more than "odds and ends," from the same source. Other ministers, too, were obliged to tolerate the King's unlicensed "helpings" of himself to the public funds.

These scenes are well described by Mr. Greville—the whisperings, "the going in to the King four times," the final return to town without matters being arranged. The King, he says, had resented this breach of agreement on the part of Lord Goderich, and the Duke of Wellington, who was with him on August 21st, learned that Mr. Herries had complained of his treatment by the Prime Minister. He was perfectly outrageous, and said Lord Goderich gave him up to the Whigs, adding that "he wanted to keep his house till his wife was confined." He then rang the bell, and bade his page call in Lord Bexley, whom he made First Lord. Mr. Huskisson, however, spoke to the King firmly, and got him to agree, but other difficulties arose.

"Taking up the account," Mr. Greville goes on, "from where I left off, Goderich went to the King, and it was settled Herries was to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. He returned and wrote to Lord Lansdowne entreating him to acquiesce. Lord Lansdowne went to the King, and the result of his interview was that he retained office together with his friends. He wrote a letter to one of them, which he intended might be communicated to others, giving an account of his conduct and motives. I saw this letter. He said the King received him very well and spared no entreaties to keep him in office. The King said that he was most anxious the present Government should continue on every account, but more particularly on account of what was now passing on the Continent; that Lord Lansdowne's holding office was indispensable for this object, and he asked him in his own name and for the sake of the country not to resign; that what had occurred had arisen out of a series of blunders which, 'let me say,' he added, 'were neither yours nor mine.' Lord Lansdowne said it was put to him in such a way that he could not do otherwise."

The Duke of Wellington had cordially disliked Mr. Canning, and wrote to the Duke of Cumberland that "he felt that Mr. Canning's temper and habits were such as to render it impossible to serve under him, without becoming liable daily to the consequences of acts done or words spoken in heat, or without quarrelling with him." Nor did this hostility much abate on the death of the great statesman. We find him writing to his friends: "I hear that Dr. Farre says it was Canning's temper that killed him."

Mr. Croker assured him that the King's confidence in his late minister was almost unlimited. Only a week before his death he had shown Mr. Croker a letter, in which the King "seemed to look to him as the protector of his dignity." He would have gradually, he said, persuaded him into even receiving Mr. Brougham. His untimely death had indeed plunged the King into fresh troubles and annoyances. "Heart and soul a Protestant," as he professed himself, he might surely now gratify his feelings by taking back all the elements of the Liverpool Cabinet, with the duke to replace its chief. The only disturbing influence had passed away. But his perplexed mind began to fluctuate. He told Mr. Huskisson that no Government could be thought of without the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel. When he was pressed therefore to send for the duke, he declared that the latter would be, "as he had always been, of the greatest comfort to him at this moment; but that after what had so freshly happened, almost with the wax of the present minister's appointments soft, he could not at once turn round upon those who had adhered to Canning, and treat them as if they were Canning's lackeys." He also spoke of his own "permanent dignity," and that the "simulance of an effort" should be made—which would enable him to take his course with the duke with greater satisfaction. The first result was the restoration of the duke to his command, which was offered to him at seven in the morning, and accepted before eight.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, August 15, 1827.

"My dear Friend,

"I write for the purpose of again offering to you the command of my army, and I sincerely hope that the time has arrived when the country will no longer be deprived of the benefit of your high talent.

"Always, with great truth, your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

The duke accepted on the following day.*

* Lord Anglesey was hurriedly despatched with the communication to the country, and arrived at Strathfieldsaye in the small hours, to find the duke just returned from a ball. Posting back with the same haste, he entered the room where the ministers were assembled, and flung himself down on a seat, exclaiming: "Well, gentlemen, I have done your commission; but I warn you, he will blow you all up!"

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, Friday night, August 17, 1827.

"My dear Friend,

"I have this evening, by the hands of Lord Anglesey, received your affectionate and dutiful letter. I write to you immediately, that I may have the pleasure and satisfaction (as soon as you can conveniently come to me) of seeing you, that you may kiss hands, and assume the command of the army without delay. I will add one word more, merely to express the happiness I shall have in receiving you.

"Ever, with true regard, your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

As may be conceived, the course of such a ministry was not only short but marked by weakness; but, it may be imagined, it was most acceptable to the King, for he carried and disposed of all sorts of appointments in the most peremptory manner, without consulting them. After the battle of Navarino, he and the Duke of Clarence dispensed the various honours and promotions. He gave his favourite, Dr. Sumner, the bishopric of Winchester.

In a conversation with Lord Colchester, Mr. Peel bitterly inveighed against this system. "The King's situation; with the existence of a personage like Sir William Knighton (who certainly had formerly got the promise of the Duchy of Lancaster for life); and the playing off one half of the Administration against the other half; the receiving recommendations to honours and offices from each party in the Government; and putting aside both, 'that neither might have a triumph,' and bestowing the favour upon some third individual of his own choice, for which there was no responsible adviser."

Against Mr. Peel the King had conceived an extraordinary dislike. "There was nobody," says Mr. Dawson, "he was more exasperated against than Peel, and for this reason: When the late Government (Canning's) was forming, Peel went to the King, and in reply to his desire that he should form a part of it, told him he could not continue in any Government the head of which was a supporter of Catholic Emancipation. The King proposed to him to remain, with a secret pledge and promise from him that the question should not be carried. This of course Peel refused; and the King, who construed his rejection of the disgraceful proposal as conveying a doubt of his word, dismissed him with much resentment.

By Christmas dissensions broke out in the Cabinet, occasioned

by a dispute as to patronage between Herries and Huskisson, so that the King declared that he "did not see why he was to be the only gentleman in his dominions who was not to eat his Christmas dinner in peace." Lord Goderich seems to have unduly magnified this not very important matter. He was, in fact, unnerved, and shrank from the dangers and troubles that were before him. Lord Campbell, who had the account from Lord Lyndhurst, describes what followed: "Late at night, on the 6th of January, he came to Lord Lyndhurst in a state of great agitation, and for some minutes walked about the room wringing his hands, without uttering any articulate sound. At last he exclaimed: 'I deem it due to you to let the Lord Chancellor know that I have made up my mind to resign immediately.' An explanation taking place, it turned out that, in reality, no new disaster had happened. The Chancellor tried to reassure him, and to advise him to meet Parliament, saying that 'after all, the session might pass off smoothly, and, at any rate, it would be more dignified to fall by an adverse vote than to tumble down with a confession of incapacity.' He attempted no answer, but mopped the perspiration from his brows with his handkerchief, as he was used to do in debate when his ideas became very confused. He now merely said that his resolution was irrevocable, and that what he feared was to break the matter to the King, who must be much perplexed by being called upon to change his Cabinet a few days before the meeting of Parliament. 'As far as that goes,' said the Chancellor, 'instead of your writing a letter to his majesty (about which there might be some awkwardness), if you do not like to face him in a private audience, I don't mind accompanying you to Windsor.' This offer was joyfully accepted, and by a dexterous stroke of policy the Chancellor became master of the position which gave him the power of forming the new Administration.

"Next day they proceeded to Windsor together. The King had been prepared for their visit by reason of a secret communication to his private secretary, who was a fast friend of the Chancellor, and his majesty received them very graciously, and accepted the resignation. 'But,' said he, rather addressing himself to the Chancellor, 'I ought to ask your advice about the person I ought to send for to consult about the formation of a new Administration.' 'Sir,' said the Chancellor, 'I venture to mention the name which must have already presented itself to the mind of your majesty—the Duke of Wellington.' King: 'Let him come to me as soon as possible.'" Lord Lyndhurst, in relating the particulars of this conference, avers that his majesty

added: "But remember, whoever is to be minister, you, my lord, must remain my Chancellor."*

THE KING TO SIR W. KNIGHTON.

"Royal Lodge, June 18th, 1827.

"As to myself, I am pretty well bodily; but I have little or no use of my poor limbs, for I can neither walk up nor down stairs, and am obliged to be carried, and in general to be wheeled about everywhere; for my powers of walking, and even of crawling about with crutches, or with the aid of a strong stick, are not in the smallest respect improved since you last saw me—at the same time that my knees, legs, ankles, and feet swell more formidably and terribly than ever. This, I am sure you will agree with me, ought now to be seriously attended to without delay by some plan devised and steadily acted upon, in order to stop the further progress, and to remedy it effectually and finally; for there is no question it is an increasing and progressive evil (at least so I fear), unless steps be found, and that speedily too, of averting it.

"You must now have had enough of my epistolary quality; I shall therefore, dear friend, hasten to a conclusion, with the assurance that I am always your sincere and affectionate friend,

"G. R."

The worthy Secretary Knighton at this time was much annoyed by rumours that he did not stand well with his royal master. Mr. Greville learned that the King was groaning under his tyranny, and would exhibit the feeling of a schoolboy in presence of his master. "When alone with him he is more civil, but when others are present (the family, for instance) he delights in saying the most mortifying and disagreeable things to him. He would give the world to get rid of him, and to have either Taylor or Mount-Charles instead, to whom he has offered the place over and over again; but Mount-Charles not only would not hear of it, but often took Knighton's part with the King. He says that his language about Knighton is sometimes of the most unmeasured violence—wishes he was dead, and one day when the door was open, so that the pages could hear, he said: 'I wish to God somebody would assassinate Knighton.' Knighton is greatly annoyed at it, and is very seldom there. Still it appears there is some secret which binds them together.

* It was reported that Lord Goderich was much affected on taking leave of the King, and that his majesty offered him a pocket-handkerchief.

The King's indolence is so great that it is next to impossible to get him to do even the most ordinary business, and Knighton is still the only man who can prevail on him to sign papers, etc." This, however, may be doubted, as the King's letters show a good-natured regard and affection for him. He was in fact indispensable—had rescued him from innumerable troubles—and got all his finances into order, and discharged debts. One of these missions has been alluded to. The King had much trouble with his nephew, the young Duke of Brunswick, whose guardian he was, and whose funds he administered. But his eccentricity had probably early displayed itself.*

* The following note of complaint was found in his own handwriting:

"The duke never could [obtain] any money during the life of Geo. IV., and only obtained the same from Wm. IV. after the Revolution of 1830.

"One most extraordinary fact is that the Duke Charles has never been able to see the testament of his father, and therefore does not to this day know the exact amount, although he has received contradictory extracts from the will. Wm. IV. admitted that he had only paid a portion of the money into the funds, and retained the rest for Prince William, who already had seized the duke's fortune."

The matter came into the English Courts, and the whole case is summed up in an elaborate judgment of Lord Langdale's. For an account of this singular case the reader is referred to a little French work, "Le Duc de Brunswick."

CHAPTER XIV.

1828.

On the new ministry being formed by the Duke of Wellington, and including Mr. Peel, Lord Lyndhurst, and others of the same political school, the King might fondly delude himself that he had now at last secured a Ministry of Protestants, and therefore after his own heart. He little dreamed that he was now entering on the most troubled era of his life, and that in its closing days he was to be forced to gulp the nauseous political potion that he had so often successfully put away from him. He was moreover to find that he had imposed upon himself the yoke of two disciplinarians, who were not to be trifled with. The surprise of this discovery must have been painful indeed. This, however, was the last thing that occurred to him, and he had settled that the Duke of Wellington was to be "my dearest friend," and with many "God bless yous!" we may presume, to be made suitably flexible by a display of enthusiastic affection. Lord Eldon, the Tory buttress, was indeed left out, which he himself attributed to secret female influence, but a better reason was that he was virtually *passé*, and not likely to be of further use.

On January the 9th, the duke was at Windsor arranging details. The duke himself gave an account of his first interview with the King to Mr. Raikes: "When he sent for me to form a new administration in 1828, he was then seriously ill, though he would never allow it. I found him in bed, dressed in a dirty silk jacket and a turban nightcap, one as greasy as the other; for, notwithstanding his coquetry about dress in public, he was extremely dirty and slovenly in private. The first words he said to

me were: 'Arthur, the Cabinet is defunct;' and then he began to describe the manner in which the late ministers had taken leave of him, on giving in their resignations. This was accompanied by the most ludicrous mimicry of the voice and manner of each individual, so strikingly like, that it was impossible to refrain from fits of laughter." The King said he presumed that the ministry must be formed of persons holding both opinions in respect to the Catholic Question; but that, as in former Protestant Governments, it must not be a Cabinet question. There must be a "Protestant" Lord Chancellor of Ireland, a "Protestant" Secretary, and "Protestant" Lord-Lieutenant. Nothing could be more explicit and determined than he was on this point. He approved, he said, of all his late and of all his former servants, and had no objection to anybody—except Lord Grey. On the whole, he left the duke *carte blanche*. With this pliant mood, the task became easy. But it would seem that he was inclined to be shifty in the case of certain undertakings as to peerages entered into by the fallen Premier. The latter was compelled to appeal to him in great distress on the matter, declaring that "his personal honour was concerned," as he would be accused of "having broken faith with those whose cases," he adds significantly, "upon his humble recommendation, received your majesty's gracious approbation."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, January 11th, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I have just received your letters. I can scarcely write. I hope in the course of the evening that you will be enabled to give me some outline as to the probable frame of your Government. Lord Goderich sent me the enclosed yesterday. I am, I suppose, pledged to make the new peers; but you had better see Lord Goderich, as I put the matter in your hands.

"Your affectionate Friend,

"G. R."

"I am, I suppose, pledged!" A strange royal declaration. The Duke of Wellington wrote to Lord Goderich, with a soldier's directness, that every case in which his majesty's pleasure had been taken, and communication made to the individual, ought to be completed as soon as possible, and "you had better give directions accordingly." Lord Goderich seems to have acted on his instruction.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"[From my bed.]

"Royal Lodge, January 14th, 1828,
"Monday, four o'clock.

"My dear Friend,

"I have just received a letter from Lord Goderich, which makes it quite necessary for me to see you to-morrow morning, Pray have the kindness to be here at ten o'clock.

"With great truth, ever your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

THE SAME.

"Royal Lodge, Thursday night, January 17th, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I have just received your list, which, of course, I do approve; and I feel very sensibly the very arduous task you have undertaken. Nevertheless, under your care and guidance, I trust it will all do well. I am really quite heartbroken respecting my friend the Duke of Devonshire and my friend Lord Carlisle. Can you suggest any means of keeping the duke?

"Yours affectionately,
"G. R.

"It is really essential to my private affairs that Scarlett should be kept, if possible. There is much depending in my duchies upon this gentleman's particular knowledge and talent.
"G. R." *

His poignant feelings on parting with the Duke of Devonshire had been more or less excited by "a scene of an affecting kind" when that nobleman came to resign his office in person. He was also much concerned about the Duke of Argyll.

THE SAME.

"Royal Lodge, January 28, 1828,
"Monday evening, seven o'clock.

"My dear Friend,

"I lose not a moment in forwarding to you a letter which I have just received, and which I must candidly acknowledge to

* Scarlett was a favourite from his declining to mix himself up with the Queen's trial. On a commission for inquiry into the courts of the Duchy of Lancashire his majesty wrote: "The King *most earnestly* desires that Sir J. Scarlett be prevailed upon to place himself at the head of this commission. The King feels himself personally obliged to Sir James Scarlett for the manner and conduct pursued by him in the late trial of the Duchy of Cornwall. The King has the greatest confidence in this gentleman."

you distresses me much. The Duke of Argyll's statement is perfectly correct. I therefore desire you will see if anything yet can be done to remedy this very unpleasant business, as I cannot submit to the Duke of Argyll's conceiving that it was by any desire of mine that he has received his dismissal. Your sentiments coinciding so completely with mine, I am sure you will know how to appreciate my feelings upon this subject, and that you will do all you can to relieve me from this embarrassment.

"Always most truly yours,

"G. R."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, Wednesday evening, seven o'clock,
"January 30th, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I thank you for the letters you sent me to-day. I am perfectly satisfied with what you have stated respecting the Duke of Argyll, and I therefore enclose to you the Duke of Gordon's warranty, which I had delayed putting my signature to until I had received your answer to my letter. I congratulate you upon everything having apparently gone off so tranquilly and so well yesterday in both Houses of Parliament.

"Always most truly yours,

"G. R."

In the question of the Corporation and Test Act, it would appear that the King's Protestant feelings were treated with scant consideration. The Protestant peers wished that the solemn, all-important words, "I am a Protestant," should find a place. The Duke and the Chancellor supported this view. We find the King uttering his querulous and unavailing complaints.

THE SAME.

"St. James's Palace, Friday, two o'clock, P.M.
"April 25th, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I received your box, with the account of last night's debate, about an hour since. I wish that you had come and talked the business over with me that was to take place in the House of Lords, previous to your going down to the House yesterday. Had I entertained the slightest idea of what was to occupy the House, I should most certainly have desired your attendance, and that of our friend the Chancellor, before the discussion.

"After that which did pass in a conversation (not long since) between me and the Archbishop of Canterbury upon this very

subject, and in which I strongly expressed my own sentiments, which for years and years have never varied, I feel that unless the word Protestant be introduced as proposed into the Act itself, individually, as a Protestant, and as the head and protector of the religion of this country, we have virtually no sort of permanent security left us to look to for the preservation of the Established Church.

"I am most anxious, my dear friend, that you should show this letter to the Chancellor, at the first moment you can see him, and at any rate before he takes his seat on the woolsack.

"Always your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

The duke must, in familiar phrase, "have been sick" of these protestations. The first instance in which his majesty tried his power was in the well-known Huskisson episode, when affected resignation and it streatment by the duke was a valuable precedent, and had no doubt exercised a wholesome influence, the memorable reply: "There is no mistake," etc., operating as a warning against such political coquetting. When the question of his successor was under consideration, the King wrote:

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"St. James's Palace, Sunday, four o'clock, P.M.,
"May 25th, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"Pray come to no immediate conclusion upon any new arrangement until I see you to-morrow. I have thought much upon this subject since we parted. What do you think of the enclosed list, which has occurred to me?

"G. R."

But the duke replied dryly: "I am afraid the arrangement suggested by your majesty would not answer." *

There was a delicate *finesse*, too, in his mode of administering

* The duke had carelessly said that "we should soon be as weak and contemptible as Goderich." This phrase struck Lord Palmerston, for he recollected his friend Huskisson describing the King as using it. The King was prompted by the Duke of Cumberland, who kept repeating to him that the duke had no energy or decision, and was "as weak as Goderich," and the King, who could be played on with catch phrases, adopted it as his own. It thus got abroad, and was repeated to the duke, who, much nettled, determined to assert himself. This seems a plausible account enough. Lord Palmerston always said that the King "hated him."

a rebuke to the King, who had taken on himself too hastily to endorse an application for an Irish peerage for Mr. Daly, which Lord Anglesey had forwarded. He apologised to his majesty for Lord Anglesey's having sent the official record to the King before his Majesty had the opportunity of considering whether it should be made. And later, again, he wrote on the same subject: "Since my arrival in town, I observe that your majesty has signed the letter to Lord Anglesey. I propose to keep that document in my possession till I learn your majesty's pleasure upon it."

A glimpse of the King at this time in his social moments is not unpleasing: "June 29th.—I dined yesterday with the King at St. James's—his Jockey Club dinner. We assembled in the Throne-room, and found him already there, looking very well and walking about. Nobody spoke, and he laughed and said: 'This is more like a Quaker than a Jockey Club meeting.' He was particularly gracious to me, talking to me across the table and recommending all the good things; he made me (after eating a quantity of turtle) eat a dish of crawfish soup, till I thought I should have burst. After dinner the Duke of Leeds, who sat at the head of the table, gave 'The King.' We all stood up, when his majesty thanked us, and said he hoped this would be the first of annual meetings of the sort to take place, there or elsewhere under his roof. He then ordered paper, pens, etc., and they began making matches and stakes; the most perfect ease was established, just as much as if we had been dining with the Duke of York, and he seemed delighted. He made one or two little speeches, one recommending that a stop should be put to the exportation of horses. He twice gave 'The Turf,' and at the end the Duke of Richmond asked his leave to give a toast, and again gave 'The King.' He thanked all the gentlemen, and said that there was no man who had the interests of the turf more at heart than himself, that he was delighted at having this party, and that the oftener they met the better, and he only wanted to have it pointed out to him how he could promote the pleasure and amusement of the turf, and he was ready to do anything in his power. Nothing could go off better, and Mount-Charles told me he was sure he was delighted."

Many as had been the struggles with ministers and others in which the King had been engaged, and in which he had to display the arts of delay, wheedling, and craft—in all of which he was a proficient—the severest and most disagreeable of all was now before him. He was to be once more confronted with the eternal Catholic question, and to have the task, "most painful to his feelings," according to his favourite expression, of bringing it to

a solution. It was unfortunate for him that such a moment had been chosen; for he was at that time almost a dying man, or, as his physician put it, "was fast breaking up." During the years 1828 and 1829 he suffered acutely from gouty swellings in his hands and feet: his ankles, always small and attenuated, were insufficient to bear the growing bulk of his body, and on slight exercise swelled up. This gave him a disinclination to walk or go out, and this sedentary life increased his ailments. He was racked with pains, which could only be alleviated by large doses of laudanum—a hundred drops at a time—administered by direction of Sir Henry Halford, with protest on the part of Sir W. Knighton.

It was this condition of the King that was one of the chief embarrassments of the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel in their determination to "settle" this great question, a determination to which they had been led long before even a suspicion of their purpose had got abroad. Nor was it so much the physical state of the King, as his shifty impracticable humour which, though the minister had the power of controlling and even intimidating for a time, yet opened opportunities for bigoted opponents to work on. His weakness of "taking the advice of the last person he saw," according to Lady Hertford's expression, and his eager wish to show that he was a King according to the old pattern of his father, made it the most hopeless and harassing task to "fix" him to any engagement; while, finally, his twenty years' adherence to the fanatical side had fostered an almost rabid bigotry, perfectly genuine, influenced by these protracted and excited conversations with intemperate men of that faction, of which the reader has had many specimens. "Between the King and his brothers, the government of this country has become a most heartbreaking concern. Nobody can ever know where he stands upon any subject." So said the duke, in perfect despair at his shiftiness in another matter.

At this time occurred a curious family episode, which added to the troubles of the ailing monarch. The Duke of Clarence, lately appointed Lord High Admiral, had been showing symptoms of extravagance, if not of eccentricity in his behaviour. This took the shape of an unseemly perverseness and of undignified resentment against one of his colleagues who ventured to remonstrate against his proceedings. The Duke of Wellington was generally required to recall these royal brethren to their good behaviour, and this he did with a wholesome severity of which they stood in awe. The Lord High Admiral, by the terms of his patent, was no more than president of a council, and could not act without its advice, and of this he was respectfully reminded

by Sir G. Cockburn, his colleague. To this, on the 10th of July, he responded, dating from his yacht, Royal Sovereign, on which vessel he had embarked without leave. This strange composition ran:

"SIR,

"Your letter does not give me displeasure, but concern, to see one I had kept when appointed to this situation of Lord High Admiral, constantly opposing what I consider good for the King's service. In this free country everyone has a right to have his opinion, and I have therefore to have mine, which differs totally from yours. . . . I cannot conclude without repeating, my council is not to dictate, but to give advice."

He later complained of receiving a letter, "if possible, a more disrespectful, more impertinent, if possible, than his first."

Appeal was made to the King, who thus intervened:

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF CLARENCE.

"Royal Lodge, Tuesday night, July 15, 1828.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,

"My friend the Duke of Wellington, as my first minister, has considered it his duty to lay before me the whole of the correspondence that has taken place with you upon the subject relating to yourself and Sir George Cockburn. It is with feelings of the deepest regret that I observe the embarrassing position in which you have placed yourself. You are in error from the beginning to the end. This is not a matter of opinion, but a positive fact; and when the Duke of Wellington so properly calls your attention to the words of your patent, let me ask you how Sir George Cockburn could have acted otherwise?

"You must not forget, my dear William, that Sir George Cockburn is the King's Privy Councillor, and so made by the King to advise the Lord High Admiral. What becomes of Sir George Cockburn's oath, his duty towards me, his sovereign, if he fails to offer such advice as he may think necessary to the Lord High Admiral? Am I, then, to be called upon to dismiss the most useful and perhaps the most important naval officer in my service for conscientiously acting up to the letter and spirit of his oath and his duty? The thing is impossible. I love you most truly, as you know, and no one would do more or go further to protect and meet your feelings; but on the present occasion I have no alternative; you must give way, and listen to the affection of your best friend and most attached brother,

"G. R."

The King was complimented by the Duke of Wellington on this production, as being a most able and judicious one.

The Lord High Admiral vindicated himself to his brother in terms of great effusion, "rejoicing in the affection and friendship of fifty-seven years." He adds rather unhandsomely: "I shall, however, make one observation; that Sir G. Cockburn cannot be the most useful and the most important officer in your majesty's service, who never had the ships he commanded in proper fighting order."

Mr. Croker, who was then secretary to the Admiralty, describes with much humour the behaviour of the duke at the office—picturing him as glancing at the officer who had displeased him with considerable exasperation, and threatening his "own eternal displeasure." Sir G. Cockburn positively declined to withdraw his remonstrance or its terms, though he was induced at last to express regret for having offended his highness. Thus the matter was composed for a few weeks, when the Court was again annoyed to learn that on a squadron putting to sea under Sir H. Blackwood, the eccentric High Admiral had joined them in his Royal Sovereign yacht, flying his flag, and all without the King's orders.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, August 3, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"If the Lord High Admiral cannot make up his mind to fill his station according to the laws of the country, it will be quite impossible for the King to retain him in his present situation. It is very painful to my feelings, after all that has passed, that you should be placed in the disagreeable position of again explaining to my brother my sentiments, and consequently those of my Government, who are the responsible agents in this matter.

"No man understands discipline better than my brother, therefore I am the more surprised at his hoisting his flag as Lord High Admiral without my orders.

"Your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

THE SAME.

"Royal Lodge, August 10, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"My sentiments coincide entirely with yours upon this disagreeable altercation with the Lord High Admiral. As he

dines with me on the next Tuesday (the 12th) I desire you will be with me early on that day, in order that I may have some conversation with you before I see my brother.

"Ever your sincere Friend,

"G. R.

"P.S.—I will restore your papers to you when I shall see you here."

THE SAME.

"Royal Lodge, August 11, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I have read with the most careful attention your further correspondence with the Lord High Admiral.

"I will repeat to your Grace the words that I used to my brother when I had occasion to write to him on this painful subject, namely: 'That he was in error from beginning to the end.'

"I now desire distinctly to state, once for all, that I most entirely approve of all that you, in the exercise of your bounden duty towards me, as my First Minister, have communicated to the Lord High Admiral on the subject now before me. When I appointed my brother to the station of Lord High Admiral I had reasonably hoped that I should have derived comfort, peace, and tranquillity from such an appointment; but from what has hitherto taken place, it would seem as if the very reverse were to happen.

"Can the Lord High Admiral suppose that the laws are to be infringed, the rules of true discipline (which he knows so well how to uphold) are to be broken in upon? and that these things are to pass without notice or remonstrance by the responsible advisers of the Crown? Can the Lord High Admiral suppose that his best friend and his sovereign is to have no feeling under the circumstances? I am quite aware that I am drawing fast to the close of my life; it may be the will of the Almighty that a month, a week, a day, may call the Lord High Admiral to be my successor. I love my brother William: I have always done so to my heart's core; and I will leave him the example of what the inherent duty of a King of this country really is. The Lord High Admiral shall strictly obey the laws enacted by Parliament, as attached to his present station, or I desire immediately to receive his resignation.

"Such are my commands to your grace.

"Ever your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

The Lord High Admiral had to resign.

CHAPTER XV.

1828—1829.

The election of Mr. O'Connell for Clare, in July, 1828, was of course the event that forced on the settlement, and Lord Eldon and other sagacious observers at once felt just forebodings that the "duke intends next Session to emancipate the Catholics." In fact, early in August both he and Mr. Peel had taken their resolution, though it is plain that the duke was determined not to allow his hand to be forced by eager agitators on that side till the moment arrived. It was to come in the form of a concession from opponents, and not as the victory of a party. This may explain his behaviour to his own Lord Lieutenant, Lord Anglesey. The political incidents have been often set out, and are familiar enough; but, as we have said, the management of the King, and the faction of dukes and lords who had access to him, required the greatest delicacy.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, Friday night, twelve o'clock, July 12, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I have this moment received your box, with your long, most interesting, and important letter, and other annexations, concerning which at this late hour I will say nothing, but reserve my sentiments (which, by-the-bye, are entirely in unison with your representations) for a personal interview, when I shall freely enter with you into every part of the present matter, so (as I hope) not only to settle this immediate question, but to put the extinguisher upon all and every future attempt which might

(otherwise and at some most unexpected moment) hereafter arise, or rather recur, if not now and immediately (but with good-humour and firmness) stopped *in limine*. Your time I know in general is (and must be most particularly so at the present moment) so cruelly occupied with a variety of important matter and matters, that I can scarcely bring myself to name any particular day or hour for your attendance upon me, under the apprehension that it might possibly interfere with the only moments of relaxation and comfort which so sparingly fall to your share. However, as the Chancellor is to be in attendance upon me between twelve and one o'clock on Sunday next (the day after to-morrow), to converse over some matters of importance, and to which you must be a primitive, but at any rate a most essential party, perhaps you will deem it not inconvenient, and more eligible, to come to the Lodge about the same hour, by which all purposes may be at once and more easily answered than by separate conferences.

"Believe me, always your most sincere Friend,

"G. R."

The first opening of the matter of the King is shown in the following:

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, August 3, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I have read with the most anxious attention your memorandum respecting the present state of Ireland. I fear the picture of that unhappy country is but too true. You have my full permission to go into the question of Ireland with the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Peel, and we have this settled understanding, that I pledge myself to nothing with respect to the Cabinet, or any future proceeding, until I am in possession of your plan.

"Always your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

This document had been judiciously prepared with a view of leading the King's mind to what was to follow; but he little knew that only a few days later Mr. Peel had addressed a letter to his colleague, the duke, declaring that the time had come for a change of policy towards the Roman Catholics. While everything was going on well, the whole had been nearly shipwrecked by the news of Mr. Dawson's awkwardly-timed speech at Derry, which aroused, not unnaturally, the King's quick suspicions. He shrewdly conceived that it was connected with some change

of view in the Cabinet. The Chancellor was with him a long time, as Mr. Greville well recollected, trying to tranquillise him. He believed that the speech was made in concert with Mr. Peel and the duke, to prepare the way. This unpleasant *contretemps* increased their difficulties.

The day after the memorandum had been shown to the King, he had interviews with Mr. Peel and the Duke of Wellington separately, and found that both agreed in their views. To Mr. Peel he had sent a sort of manifesto:

[EXTRACT.]

"The sentiments of the King upon Catholic Emancipation are those of his revered and excellent father. From those sentiments the King never can and never will deviate."

The duke assured him it was no longer an open question. The King then invited the Cabinet to submit their views, without engaging himself to adopt them. He criticised Mr. Peel's paper as "a good one, though not an argumentative one." In the curious struggle we are now entering on, a certain sympathy must be accorded to the King, who fought the battle with extraordinary resolution, though with little skill. There is no doubt his prejudices and convictions were engaged; for, like many men of loose life, he conceived that exertion in the cause of religion to a fanatical degree was as effectual as good moral conduct. Great allowance, too, must be made for him, considering the exertions of selfish persons about him—statesmen, bishops, and others—who encouraged him in resistance.

So early as September the duke had informed Lord Anglesey that he would lay the Bill for Emancipation before the King when he got better. The King had taken a particular aversion to the Lord-Lieutenant, and was eager to recall him. But though the latter was acting with too much independence for a proconsul, the duke advocated reserve, and it was not until the well-known incident of the "Curtis letter" that he was recalled.

His majesty was indeed in a precarious way. The gout was raging in his hands, which were so swelled that he could not sign public documents—a serious labour when a number were to be perfected—and it was proposed to have a sort of stamp, to be affixed with due formalities. However, in the midst of his illness, he had all the Anglesey documents read to him, though suffering acutely; so eager and "intense" was he on this subject. By October he was slowly "creeping out of his illness," and, as though he scented the danger, proposed that the venerable Eldon should be called into the Government as President of the

Council. This ludicrous notion the duke put aside, almost sarcastically telling his majesty that Lord Eldon was an inconvenient sort of colleague, for he was often not disposed to take his share in the advocacy of measures for which the Government were responsible. It would also, he added significantly, be interpreted by the public as evidence of a change of opinion. He then once more pressed on him the frightful state of Ireland, and the possibility of finding no remedy unless the whole state of the question—an elastic but very significant phrase—was taken into consideration.

Early in November the duke sent the King his letter to Lord Anglesey, which was of a severe character, and which gave his majesty, ill as he was, great delight. He fancied that this nobleman was the embodiment of the pro-Catholic cause, and his minister was, perhaps, not disinclined to let him direct his hostile feelings in that direction. "His majesty says," wrote Sir W. Knighton "(I use his own words), that it is quite a cordial to his feelings. The King read your letter twice over; he says it has quite relieved him." Thus encouraged, the duke next despatched a long paper or scheme of arrangement for the Catholics, which now fills some twenty printed pages, and which he desired to submit to the Protestant bishops.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, November 17, 1828.

"My dear Friend,

"I am unable to use the pen myself; I can therefore only dictate.

"I have no objection to your sending the paper to the bishops; but then, let it be under your own authority, and not from my recommendation, as the only means of avoiding all comments with respect to myself.

"I also think that Mr. Peel should see the paper, as well as your letter to me; but all this must proceed from yourself.

"I consider your paper very able; but on the point in question I need not tell you what my feelings are.

"Your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

Here are evident some uneasy forebodings. But the duke had sent a severe rebuke to Lord Anglesey, in reply to a letter of that nobleman. On which the King rallied, and gave vent to his "feelings" in one of his most characteristic, rambling, and strangely-qualified letters.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, November 20, 1828. Half-past eleven A.M.

"My dear Friend,

"Though it is still attended with much pain and difficulty, I cannot return your interesting despatch of last night without its being accompanied with a short line from my own poor enfeebled hand.

"Your answer carries with it (as it appears to me) all that frankness, point, and at the same time firmness, which it ought to do; whilst, on the other hand, the Lord-Lieutenant's letter is nothing but a proud and pompous farrago of the most *outré* bombast, of eulogium upon himself, his political principles, and his government of Ireland, without, at least materially, according to the best of my recollection, answering or even alluding to any one of the very essential points which you so properly and so necessarily pressed upon him in your original letter, and which has called forth this most curious document and specimen of pride in the shape of a reply.

"Consistency and firmness is, and must be, the only line for us to pursue if he will not take and understand the very clear, and at the same time liberal and gentlemanly hint in its tone, given to him by you in your former letter; I and my Government must act for ourselves, and he must be removed by us as shortly as possible, but with all proper dignity on our part, accompanied by as much personal attention to himself as the nature of the case will admit; for if it required anything more than I have already stated, I am sure that it would betray the utmost folly and weakness in the Government could they be supposed for one instant to fancy to themselves, after being in possession of this most curious reply, and especially from the tone in which it is written, that they either could or that the writer himself would ever submit to be interfered with, or (much less) to be guided by them in any essential measure which the state of Ireland may, in our opinion, call for. At any rate, cordial support you never can nor must expect from the present Lord-Lieutenant.

"Ever your sincere Friend,

"G. R.

"P.S.—I must apologise for this scrawl, but I cannot hold the pen any longer."

This letter and the Curtis incident brought matters to a crisis. Lord Anglesey had indiscreetly and indecorously advised that the agitation should not relax. This threw the King into a state of blind fury. For three days, as the Duke of Wellington told Mr.

Greville's mother, he inveighed against him, declaring that he was setting up "as King of Ireland." After so insubordinate a step, it was impossible that he could remain, and on the 30th of December he was recalled. Mr. Greville gives the following sketch of the Windsor "interior" at this time, furnished to him by one who had the best opportunities of observing: "Lord Mount-Charles came to me this morning (January 12) and consulted me about resigning his seat at the Treasury. He told me that he verily believed the King would go mad on the Catholic question, his violence was so great about it. He is very angry with him and his father for voting as they do, but they have agreed never to discuss the matter at all, and his mother never talks to the King about it. Whenever he does get on it there is no stopping him. Mount-Charles attributes the King's obstinacy to his recollections of his father and the Duke of York, and to the influence of the Duke of Cumberland. He says that 'his father would have laid his head on the block rather than yield, and that he is equally ready to lay his head there in the same cause.' He is furious with Lord Anglesey, but he will be very much afraid of him when he sees him. Mount-Charles was in the room when Lord Anglesey took leave of the King on going to Ireland, and the King said: 'God bless you, Anglesey! I know you are a true Protestant.' Anglesey answered: 'Sir, I will not be considered either Protestant or Catholic; I go to Ireland determined to act impartially between them, and without the least bias either one way or the other.' "

These, however, were all hints and foreshadowings. It was not until the new year began, and the meeting with Parliament impended, that the serious difficulty had to be grappled with. The plan had to be formally opened to the King, and his consent as formally obtained; a matter of enormous difficulty, made more difficult by the hesitation that had been used. Then set in a singular struggle, in which there were really dramatic elements—the helpless, shifty, and dying monarch, contending vainly with the two resolute intellects. Lord Ellenborough kept some memoranda of the stages of the business,* which will be found interesting.

On the 26th of January the duke undertook the task of belling the royal cat, and of going out to see the King to state to him the points agreed upon in the Cabinet. These were embodied in a sort of general minute, which it was considered incumbent, for obvious reasons, that the King should sign. In this the duke succeeded, and it will be seen later how prudent was this precaution.

* Given in the Duke of Wellington's "Desp. Cor. Mem.," vol. v.

MINUTE SIGNED BY THE KING ON JANUARY 26, 1829.

"The King has considered the representations made to him by such of the members of his Cabinet as have been generally adverse to the concession of further political power to the King's Roman Catholic subjects. It has been earnestly pressed upon the King, as a measure not merely expedient, but necessary, that the King's Cabinet should take into its immediate consideration the whole state of Ireland, and particularly with the view of preparing measures for the suppressing of the Roman Catholic Association, of altering the law respecting the elective franchise in that part of the kingdom, and of proposing such arrangements relative to the existing disabilities of the King's Roman Catholic subjects as may lead to a final settlement of that difficult question. The King, attending to the representations that have been so made to him, and the reasoning by which they have been supported, acquiesces in what has been thus strongly recommended; but without in any degree pledging himself to the approval or adoption of the measures that may be proposed as the result of the deliberations of his Cabinet.

"(Approved) "G. R."

It will be seen that even here they had not ventured to open their whole programme; concession of "further" political power might be reduced to some small act of indulgence, and his reserved power of dissent seemed to him a certain resource. But he was drawn on step by step.

On the 28th the duke reported that the King agreed to the words for the speech, but seemed very reluctant. When the duke said that the Catholics were to be excluded from judicial offices connected with the Church, the King said: "What, do you mean a Catholic to hold any judicial office? to be a Judge of the King's Bench?" When seats in Parliament were mentioned, he said: "D——n it, do you mean to let them into Parliament?" In the interval before settling the words of the speech, the King had contrived to start a point, and in the Council on the 2nd of February, when the speech was being read, at the paragraph, "His Majesty recommends," etc., the King said: "The whole condition of Ireland includes the Catholic question, and I see no reason why that part of the paragraph should not be omitted." The duke said: "Your majesty has Roman Catholic subjects in other parts of your dominions besides Ireland." The King acquiesced, and at the end of the speech expressed himself quite satisfied with it.

Parliament now met, and the exciting Session began. On the

5th of February the King's Speech announced to the world that it was intended "to review the laws which imposed disabilities" on the Roman Catholics.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Windsor Castle, Sunday morning, February 8, 1829.

"My dear Friend,

"I return you the answer to the Address of the House of Peers, with my signature to the Address affixed to it.

"I cannot have the smallest objection to your reading or referring upon the present occasion (should you find it necessary to do so) to any letter in which you may have made mention of my name in your correspondence with Lord Anglesey, for I never for a moment can entertain a doubt either of your prudence or of your caution where I am concerned.

"The Council, the nomination of the Sheriffs, the Recorder's Report, and the presentation of the Duke of Northumberland (according to your desire), I shall hold myself in readiness to receive as usual here on Wednesday next, the 11th, at two o'clock P.M.

"Ever your sincere Friend,

"G. R."

It is not difficult, however, to see that he was looking to a chance of failure, and that he was induced to yield thus much by the measures of apparent severity that were to precede it. A memorandum in his handwriting, among the Duke of Wellington's papers, supports this view: "The King in recommending, in the speech from the throne, the putting down the illegal and rebellious assemblage of his subjects in Ireland, under the name of the Catholic Association, understood it to be an abstract measure, and one of positive necessity, and connected with the existence of all good government. The King always supposed that this was to be followed by the repeal of the law that gave the right of voting to the forty-shilling freeholders. Then, after these two measures, that it would be safe to take into consideration the question of Catholic Disabilities."

Lord Eldon, while complaining of the "mysterious concealment" of the Government plan till that moment, expressed his opinion that the best course now for the beguiled "Protestants" was to obtain the fullest statement of the details of the measure, and then "as long an interval of delay as possible for and during the discussion." No doubt his majesty was encouraged by the arrival of that strange character the Duke of Cumberland, who had flown from Berlin to take part in the fray, dining with the

Prime Minister the night after his arrival, but presently to cause him infinite difficulties and annoyance by his intrigues. This disastrous influence was presently to be felt in new obstruction on the part of the King, in new shifts and pretences, so that the matter seemed likely to come to shipwreck.* He seems to have never relaxed an instant in his underground intrigues, and, if we can trust Mr. Greville, was one of the most odious beings that ever existed. So that we find the Duke of Wellington writing to Sir W. Knighton to say that if the "Duke of Cumberland thought he could make a Government, he had better give his advice to the King, and so end matters." He himself would seem to have been with the King on the 26th, when "a very disagreeable conversation" had taken place. For his majesty, seriously alarmed at the way he was being drawn on, appears to have determined on resistance. "The King begged he would not speak to the Household, and seemed to intimate they were to vote against the Government. The King's conversation before mixed companies and his servants has been most imprudent. The King seems to have been very nervous at dinner and absent. He seems to have intended to say more to the duke than he did, but, being interrupted by the duke, perhaps regretted he had said so much." It was settled, however, that on the following day the duke should bring matters to a point—no doubt by exerting his well-known mastery over the King's mind; and that night at eleven the Cabinet were relieved to learn that their chief had had entire success. The interview had lasted five hours. As was to be expected, the King had not only yielded, but yielded abjectly, "declaring himself more satisfied with the Bill than anything he had seen." He would even order the Duke of Cumberland to quit England. He gave up on the point of the Household. The duke confessed to his friends that he had to use "very peremptory language to him," which made the

* A good idea of this well-known personage's character may be obtained from his views on bishops, written to Lord Strangford in 1850, when he states that "the first change and shock in the ecclesiastical habits was the bishops being allowed to lay aside their wigs, their purple coats, short cassocks, and stocking, and cocked hats, when appearing in public; for I can remember when Bishop Heard of Worcester, Courtenay of Exeter, and Markham, Archbishop of York, resided in Kew and its vicinity, that, as a boy, I met them frequently walking about dressed as I now tell you; and their male servants appeared equally all dressed in purple, which was the custom. The late Bishop of Oxford (Bagot) was the first who persuaded George IV. to allow him to lay aside his wig, because his wife found him better looking without it. I recollect full well that the Bishop of London, who succeeded Bishop Porteous, coming to St. James's to do homage to my father, when Lord Sidmouth was Secretary of State, and he came into

scene very painful, so that the King was thrown into great agitation, and even spoke of abdicating. At the end he was kind and gracious, and even kissed his visitor on leaving.

The Duke of Cumberland, ignorant of the sentence passed on him, wrote to the Duke of Wellington, declaring that he meant to call on him, but he should certainly tell his friends all that passed. "My character must stand clear before them." He was disagreeably surprised by receiving a communication, brusque and haughty to a degree. "I assure your royal highness that I have nothing to talk to your royal highness upon respecting which I care whether it is stated to the whole world. I have no business to transact except his majesty's, and do not care who knows it." He further sent a formal complaint to the King of the underhand proceedings of the Duke of Cumberland, who was now opening communications with Members of Parliament in the King's name, and sending circulars to the Household requiring their attendance.

In one of the debates in the House of Lords, Mr. Greville tells, there was an amusing, if not an unbecoming, spectacle. "The three royal dukes, Clarence, Cumberland, and Sussex, got up one after another, and attacked each other (that is, Clarence and Sussex attacked Cumberland, and he them) very vehemently, and they used towards each other language that nobody else could have ventured to employ; so it was a very droll scene. The Duke of Clarence said the attacks on the Duke [of Wellington] had been infamous; the Duke of Cumberland took this to himself, but when he began to answer it could not recollect the expression, which the Duke of Clarence directly supplied: 'I said "infamous."' The Duke of Sussex said that the Duke of Clarence had not intended to apply the word to the Duke of Cumberland, but if he chose to take it to himself he might. Then the Duke of Clarence said that the Duke of Cumberland

the closet, where I was at the time, and informed his majesty 'that the bishop was there, but that he had refused to introduce him as he had not a wig.' Upon which the King replied: 'You were perfectly right, my lord; and tell the bishop from me that until he has shaven his head, and has provided himself with a wig suitable to his garb, I shall not admit him into my presence.'" The King himself complained that he had been disgusted by seeing the Bishop of London (Blomfield) "attend the committee-room in the House of Lords in a black Wellington coat, with top-boots, and coming in with a hat like a butcher or coachmaster." King Ernest entertained a perfect detestation for the Bishop of Exeter, never having forgiven him for voting for Sir Robert Peel at the Oxford election in 1829. He alluded to him as "that ugly vagabond, Philpotts." On Lord Truro being raised to the woolsack, he wrote: "What a scandal! what a disgrace! to have raised that blackguard Wilde to the Lord Chancellorship."

had lived so long abroad that he had forgotten there was such a thing as freedom of debate."

Meanwhile, on the very day of the duke's stormy interview with the King, Mr. Peel had been defeated at the Oxford election, which at once renewed his majesty's hopes. He began to talk "of the people standing by him," and would not separate from his brother. Madame de Lieven, who had a vehement dislike to the Duke of Wellington, was secretly working on the Duke of Cumberland. We are not therefore surprised to find on Sunday, the 1st of March, the Chancellor with him, vainly urging him to direct the Household, as he had promised, to vote for the bill. He was in bed, and for three hours the minister was striving to bring him to reason. He said he would abdicate—henceforth a favourite declaration to all his visitors—he would send Lord Bexley to the House of Lords with a letter to that effect. The Chancellor returned without having effected any change, and the greatest alarm and excitement prevailed in political circles, for it was idly believed that he would be firm, and that ministers must resign. So serious was the crisis that the Chancellor travelled all that night to the duke's country seat, reaching it at three in the morning, and returning to London before ten. But the Cabinet was not to be trifled with. A council was instantly held, after which a letter was despatched to the King, reminding him of his written agreement to this programme, requiring his renewed assent, and enclosing a copy of his signed approbation of the minute.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Windsor Castle, Tuesday, eleven o'clock A.M.
"March 3, 1829.

"My dear Friend,

"I will answer your letter as soon as I can possibly collect my thoughts sufficiently to put them upon paper.

"Ever your most sincere Friend,

"G. R."

THE SAME.

"My dear Friend,

"I really wish to see you, the Chancellor, and Mr. Peel, to-morrow. I shall be ready to receive you punctually at twelve to-morrow, and all three together. I cannot tell you how much your letter, received this morning, has embarrassed me.

"Ever your sincere Friend,

"G. R.

"P.S.—Pray let the Chancellor and Mr. Peel know."

This invitation masked a new design. The three ministers went down. There are two accounts of this interview, which were dramatic from the feelings and interests engaged. "When we arrived," said Mr. Peel, "he received us cordially, but seemed grave, and labouring under anxiety and weariness. He said that we must be aware that it had caused him the greatest pain to give his assent to the proposition made to him by his Cabinet, that they should be at liberty to offer their collective advice on the Catholic question, and still greater pain to feel that he had no alternative but to act upon the advice which he had received. He added that as the matter was to be brought forward in Parliament, he wished to learn from ministers 'a more complete and detailed explanation of the manner in which it was proposed to act.' On this I explained that the chief impediment, the oaths of supremacy, were to be repealed. The King seemed much surprised, and said rapidly and earnestly: 'What is this? You surely do not mean to alter the ancient oath of supremacy!' He appealed to each on this point. They again explained the reasons in detail. The King observed, that be that as it might, he could not possibly consent to any alteration of the ancient oath of supremacy; that he was exceedingly sorry that there had been any misunderstanding on so essential a point."

Five hours were passed in hopeless attempts to convince him; and at the close they informed him they must resign. He accepted their resignation, and sent, Mr. Greville says, to Lord Eldon, who thought over a plan that would include the Duke of Richmond, but soon found it was impracticable.* On the following day the duke received his sovereign's submission—a humiliating transaction.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Windsor Castle, Wednesday evening, eight o'clock,
"March 5, 1829.

"My dear Friend,

"As I find the country would be left without an Administration, I have decided to yield my opinion to that which is considered by the Cabinet to be for the immediate interests of the country. Under these circumstances you have my consent to proceed as you propose with the measure. God knows what pain it costs me to write these words.

"G. R."

* Peel, "Memoir," i. 343. There is no mention of Lord Eldon's share in the transaction in Mr. Twiss's "Biography."

But this would not do. The duke answers at midnight. There is a stern tone in the communication.

"Mr. Peel will proceed with the bills to-morrow, in the full confidence and with the full understanding that your majesty's servants have your sanction and support, and that your majesty will go through with us.

"I entreat your majesty to give your gracious approbation to my letter of the 2nd instant, containing the minute of the Cabinet, or to inform me if my understanding of your majesty's letter of this afternoon is not correct."*

The King could no longer wriggle off the hook, and wrote a complete surrender.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Windsor Castle, Thursday morning, quarter-past seven,
"from my bed, March 6, 1829

"My dear Friend,

"I am awakened by the messenger with your letter, and as I know that you are much pressed for time, I send him off again immediately. You have put the right construction upon the meaning of my letter of last evening; but at the same time I cannot disguise from you that my feelings of distress in consequence are such as I do scarcely know how to support myself under them. "G. R."

Thus there was ever the same feeble protest—"his feelings" and "God knows." The weak mind thus ever fancies that words will neutralise acts.

This may be said to have ended the contest, and the King, though he indulged himself in theatrical protests and bursts of fanatical grief, virtually gave little more trouble to his ministers. Some strange frantic efforts, however, followed on the part of other opponents. The Duke of Cumberland prepared petitions, which were to be taken to Windsor and presented by imposing mobs. These proceedings excited the indignant remonstrances of the duke. The Irish archbishop and bishops came over with addresses. There were interviews three hours in length with "Protestant" lords. The duke contrived to keep all in check, and even went the length of challenging and fighting Lord Winchelsea.†

* The same doubt of craft and shiftiness occurred also to Mr. Peel, who considers the King's words "rather equivocal," and "reserving a veto." He suggested getting the King to write "approved" on the duke's letter.

† See Dr. Hame's dramatic account, in the Duke of Wellington's "Desp. Cor. and Mem."

THE KING TO LORD MACCLESFIELD.

"Windsor Castle, March 27.

"My dear Macclesfield,

"The long and sincere regard and friendship which has subsisted between us for the last seven-and-forty years, renders it unnecessary for me to make any comment upon the present occasion. The state of your health at this moment precluding (as I understand) all idea of personal audience without considerable inconvenience and risk, I will acquaint you wherever it may best suit me to receive you.

"Yours, etc. "G. R."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"April 1, 1829, half-past three, P.M.

"My dear Friend,

"I have not the smallest objection to your giving the necessary directions for every accommodation to be made in the House of Lords that can be effected for the convenience of the peers.

"Your sincere friend,

"G. R."

CHAPTER XVI.

1829.

It is painful to find ministers, till the matter was actually settled, declining to trust the King. The Duke of Wellington told the Cabinet that from his suspicions "they ought to keep Supply in hand." The duke, in introducing the bills, told the House in pointed language that "they had the sanction and approbation of his majesty," though the old Eldon tried to argue that "he was pledged to nothing." So skilfully did they deal with him, that he saw that further struggling was hopeless, and when the Duke of Cumberland came down to urge him to new efforts, he was reported to have said: "My dear Ernest, do not talk to me any more about it. I am committed, and must go through with it."

On the 10th of April the bills were passed. The old Protestant peers, however, had some faint hopes from their various interviews with his majesty, in which he expressed his feelings warmly, that even yet he would interfere. Lord Eldon's description of two of these consolatory interviews is truly characteristic. They were, of course, of many hours each. It will be seen what an uncandid account the King gives of his share in the transaction, while not a little amusement will be caused by the naïvely expressed surprise of Lord Eldon at the signed documents which so completely destroyed the case of his royal master. The King complained "that at the time the Administration was formed, no reason was given him to suppose that any measures for the relief of the Roman Catholics were intended or thought of by ministers: that he had frequently himself suggested the absolute necessity of putting down the

Roman Catholic Association—of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, to destroy the power of the most seditious and rebellious proceedings of the members of it, and particularly at the time that Lawless made his march: that instead of following what he had so strongly recommended, after some time, not a very long time before the present Session, he was applied to to allow his ministers to propose to him, as a united Cabinet, the opening the Parliament by sending such a message as his speech contained: that, after much struggling against it, and after the measure had been strongly pressed upon him as of absolute necessity, he had consented that the Protestant members of his Cabinet, if they could so persuade themselves to act, might join in such a representation to him, but that he would not then, nor in his recommendation to Parliament, pledge himself to anything. He repeatedly mentioned that he represented to his ministers the infinite pain it gave him to consent even so far as that.

"He complained that he had never seen the bills—that the condition of Ireland had not been taken into consideration—that the Association Bill had been passed through both Houses before he had seen it—that it was a very inefficient measure compared to those which he had in vain, himself, recommended—that the other proposed measures gave him the greatest possible pain and uneasiness—that he was in the state of a person with a pistol presented to his breast—that he had nothing to fall back upon—that his ministers had threatened (I think he said twice, at the time of my seeing him) to resign, if the measures were not proceeded in, and that he had said to them: 'Go on,' when he knew not how to relieve himself from the state in which he was placed; and that in one of those meetings, when resignation was threatened, he was urged to the sort of consent he gave, by what passed in the interview between him and his ministers, till the interview and the talk had brought him into such a state, that he hardly knew what he was about when he, after several hours, said: 'Go on.' He then repeatedly expressed himself as in a state of the greatest misery, repeatedly saying: 'What can I do? I have nothing to fall back upon;' and musing for some time, and then again repeating the same expression.

"In this day's audience his majesty did not show me many papers that he showed me in the second. I collected, from what passed in the second, that his consent to go on was in writings then shown to me. After a great deal of time spent (still in the first interview), in which his majesty was sometimes silent—apparently uneasy—occasionally stating his distress—

the hard usage he had received—his wish to extricate himself—that he had not what to look to—what to fall back upon—that he was miserable beyond what he could express—I asked him whether his majesty, so frequently thus expressing himself, meant either to enjoin me, or to forbid me, considering or trying whether anything could be found or arranged, upon which he could fall back. He said: 'I neither enjoin you to do so, nor forbid you to do so; but, for God's sake, take care that I am not exposed to the humiliation of being again placed in such circumstances, that I must submit again to pray of my present ministers that they will remain with me.' He appeared to me to be exceedingly miserable, and intimated that he would see me again.

"I was not sent for afterwards, but went on Thursday, the 9th of April, with more addresses. In the second interview, which began a little before two o'clock, the King repeatedly, and with some minutes interposed between his such repeated declarations, musing in silence in the interim, expressed his anguish, and pain, and misery, that the measure had ever been thought of, and as often declared that he had been most harshly and cruelly treated—that he had been treated as a man whose consent had been asked with a pistol pointed to his breast, or as obliged, if he did not give it, to leap down from a five-pair-of-stairs window. What could he do? What had he to fall back upon?

"This led to his mentioning again what he had to say as to his assent. In the former interview it had been represented that, after much conversation twice with his ministers, or such as had come down, he had said: 'Go on;' and upon the latter of those two occasions, after many hours' fatigue and exhausted by the fatigue of conversation, he had said: 'Go on.' He now produced two papers, which he represented as copies of what he had written to them, in which he assents to their proceeding and going on with the bill, adding certainly in each, as he read them, very strong expressions of the pain and misery the proceedings gave him, It struck me at the time that I should, if I had been in office, have felt considerable difficulty about going on after reading such expressions; but whatever might be fair observation as to giving, or not, effect to those expressions, I told his majesty it was impossible to maintain that his assent had not been expressed, or to cure the evils which were consequential—after the bill, in such circumstances, had been read a second time, and in the Lords' House with a majority of a hundred and five. This led him to much conversation upon that fact, that he had, he said, been deserted by an aristocracy that had supported his father—that, instead of forty-five against the measure, there were twice

that number of peers for it—that everything was revolutionary—everything was tending to revolution—and the peers and the aristocracy were giving way to it. They (he said more than once or twice) supported his father; but see what they have done to him.

"He then began to talk about the coronation oath. On that I could only repeat what I had before said, if his majesty meant me to say anything upon the subject. Understanding that he did so wish, I repeated that, as far as his oath was concerned, it was a matter between him, God, and his conscience, whether giving his royal assent to this measure was 'supporting, to the utmost of his power, the Protestant Reformed religion.'

"Little more passed—except occasional bursts of expression—'What can I do? What can I now fall back upon? What can I fall back upon? I am miserable, wretched; my situation is dreadful; nobody about me to advise with. If I do give my assent, I'll go to the Baths abroad and from thence to Hanover: I'll return no more to England—I'll make no Roman Catholic peers—I will not do what this bill will enable me to do—I'll return no more—let them get a Catholic King in Clarence.' I think he also mentioned Sussex. 'The people will see that I did not wish this.'

"There were the strongest appearances certainly of misery. He, more than once, stopped my leaving him. When the time came that I was to go, he threw his arms round my neck and expressed great misery. I left him about twenty minutes or a quarter before five."

Not less characteristic was his reception of the Irish bishops, "which," says Archbishop Magee, "was warm, affecting, and cordial. He declared the strongest attachment to Protestant principles, expressed his astonishment at the suddenness of the change that had taken place on the subject of the Roman Catholic demands, spoke of the deep sufferings he had endured and was enduring upon the subject, lamented the dearth of talent that was at present manifested among public men, reckoned over some members of the Lords on whom he could place full dependence (among whom were Lords Eldon, Redesdale, Manners, and your Lordship), but having done that, he professed himself totally incapable of naming any of the Commons. One star, indeed, he said, had lately arisen (I understood him to mean Sadler), but the dearth was still lamentable. He assured us of the warm interest he felt in our behalf; and having spoken in this strain (not however committing himself as to any line he intended to take) for about half an hour, he dismissed us in a manner the most cordial."

Lord Londonderry, an old friend, also took the opportunity of

calling, and received his confidences to a great length. This conversation is equally characteristic. "On entering," writes Lord Londonderry, "the King was most kind and sympathising. He begged me to sit down, and said he was sure I was very unhappy, as I appeared to be." Lord Londonderry then said he wished to speak to him on present circumstances. "What is it then you wish to say to me?" replied the King, in rather a severe tone. After a long preamble the visitor began to explain that he could not support the new head of the Ministry.

"'I see what you are going to say,' said the King, 'but let me now have some conversation with you, and state how I have acted, and how I have been placed by the late extraordinary events; and let me show you that those who have now deserted, or are deserting me, are alone the cause why the pernicious drug and bitter pill which they forced upon me is now the cause of all the present confusion. To those persons who pressed Mr. Canning on me against my will, to those friends who now leave me in the lurch, may all the mischief and perplexity which I feel be ascribed. When I lost your incomparable brother, and my best friend, a friend and a minister that can never be replaced, I will state to you what occurred when I was on board ship, and Peel came to me with the news. But first I must say that, of all men I ever saw, he was the most clear and correct in all his views, and in nine hundred and ninety-nine times he was ever perfect in every judgment he formed, but in the thousandth he had an obstinacy arising from a conscientious feeling of honour he never would be moved from.' (Here the King went into a very minute history of all my brother's later feelings as connected with persons and circumstances wholly irrelevant to the present moment, and unnecessary and painful to put on paper.) 'Well, when Peel came to me, it was arranged between us that, in order to keep my mind quiet, no arrangement should be made till I returned to London.' He added that he wrote this to Lord Liverpool, stipulating that 'no change whatever is to take place in the arrangements fixed for India. I parted with Peel, who went up by land to town with Mrs. P., his eyes being bad and he wearing a low green shade. I heard nothing more till I came to London. All were silent until after some meetings at Walmer, and then Liverpool announced to me they could not go on without Canning, and it ended, chiefly at the instigation of the Duke of Wellington, in my consenting to that measure of his introduction into the Cabinet, which was of all others the most disagreeable to me.

"'I must, however, here do Mr. Canning the justice to say that since he has served me, I have found him considerate, and

behaving well to me in every respect. So things proceeded until after the calamity of Liverpool, and what I formerly thought would have been a desirable event has certainly turned out for me one of the most unfortunate. It is true, however, that Liverpool would not have stayed in beyond the present session, and he declared to me if he did not carry the Corn Bill he would not remain Minister; but, had he gone out, he would have arranged matters so as not to have placed me in the dilemma in which I now stand. Now, with regard to the principles upon which my Government is to be formed, I will tell you what passed between me and Londonderry upon the Catholic question. That question was the thousandth, from which nothing could move him; but I told him, after repeated discussions, it was in vain to attempt to shake me, because what Charles Fox could not accomplish, no other man could, but that as I was about take the coronation oath as King, I wished Castlereagh to consider if he thought, by any act of the Legislature, it could be so modified or arranged, previous to my taking it, as would satisfy my mind that I could, consistently with my oath, depart from those jars which impede the Catholics from the privileges of their Protestant brethren. After three weeks' reflection, he came to me, and told me he saw at present no mode of framing or proposing such a course. I then said: 'Remember, once I take this oath, I am for ever a Protestant king, a Protestant upholder, a Protestant adherent, and no power on earth will shake me on that subject.'

"I here observed, that I believed his majesty's sentiments were pretty well known on that head; but that I had never heard it so distinctly as in confidence he was now pleased to state it to me.

"'Not in confidence,' resumed he quietly; 'I declare it to you openly, broadly, distinctly. You are at liberty to state it everywhere; and the very act of the present men who desert me is to throw me into the arms of the Catholics, or commit me towards them in a manner they should have saved me from. But yet the resignation of Protestants I can in some degree understand. Peel, for instance, is a man of the highest integrity and honour, and respected by the whole country: rich in reputation, rich in domestic happiness, rich in wealth, wanting in nothing. He steers himself above every petty consideration.'

"I said: 'No man more respected. I could not say the same of the individual his majesty now confided in; and when his majesty's words in 1821, as to that person were deeply recorded in my breast; when I knew and remembered how he had acted to my sovereign and my brother, it was impossible, if I loved one or the other, that I could forget it or support his rule.'

"'Well,' replied his majesty, 'you have strong feelings. But why Lord Melville has taken the line he has I cannot understand; and none of them have estimated my difficulties, nor the course honourable to them all that I pursued. When I got Lady Liverpool's answer on the Monday I had them down at the Lodge, and I saw Wellington first; and here, if there ever was a man to whom I have paid every honour and devotion, it is he. I have bestowed on him every gift of my crown: not that he does not deserve it, but I have done as much on my part as he has done for me. Well, how could I suppose that he would condescend after uniting the command of two armies in his person on my brother's death, that he would ever leave that position to be minister?'

"I said: 'I suppose, sire, he never would have done such a thing but at the wish of your majesty, and the belief that it was for the real good of your service.'

"'Well, I told him all the difficulties. I desired him to consult with his colleagues, especially Mr. Canning and Mr. Peel, and endeavour to form an arrangement to conduct the Government as heretofore, and I told him that I would name any head that might in common be agreed upon. I then saw Mr. Canning and stated pretty much the same thing to him. He said there were innumerable difficulties, but still thought they might be got over. I then saw Mr. Peel and had a similar conversation with him. At my party at the Lodge I endeavoured, by mixing all friends, to show no partiality. In this state of things I arrived in town, having however seen the Duke of Newcastle, who conversed with me in a very unbecoming manner; and I should also say I had seen the Duke of Rutland and his brother; but he said nothing in any shape but what was of the most conciliatory and respectful description, although I told Wellington I had heard of persons in office combining their opinions as to what I should or should not do, in the most unconstitutional and improper manner, which, however, he (Wellington) had wisely arrested.'

"As I felt that at this the King looked at me, I immediately replied: 'Sir, it is quite true there are various individuals who think most unfavourably of Mr. Canning, as I do, from his speech in Parliament.'

"'I am not one of those,' rejoined the King, with great bitterness, 'who take up men's words in the heat of debate, and bring them out afterwards as palliations for any course of conduct I adopt. If speeches were to be considered, I should allude to yours in the House of Lords, when I was under all this embarrassment.'

"'Sir,' I said most respectfully, 'I felt myself in duty bound, in respect to my brother's principles, to show, in the interregnum that prevailed, that I had every confidence in those men who acted with him, while I reprobated the new system.'

"'Ay, but you forget that it was owing to a factious meeting of Whig lords that Lord Liverpool was appointed minister.'

"'Sir, there was no faction on my part. My opinion of Mr. Canning has been taken from your majesty's lips, and I have seen no cause to change it.'

"Here the Duke of Clarence was announced, perhaps fortunately!

"His majesty then resumed: 'Well, when I came to town, after seeing Wellington, the Chancellor, and Canning and Peel, and finding nothing done—and indeed nothing is done yet, although a good deal of writing has passed—I found it was absolutely necessary to act. The Chancellor, to do him justice, has acted rightly and consistently, for he stayed in before, against the grain, at my positive entreaty, and I can say nothing to him. But what can I say to those who have left me so unexpectedly and wholly uncalled for? The Duke of Wellington I cannot understand. Mr. Canning certainly informed me that Mr. Peel had named a person under whom he thought they could both act, and that was the Duke of Wellington. But this, Mr. Canning said he did not think would answer, or be consistent with his views of carrying on the Government. What then had I to do? or what course had I to steer? No one would take the responsibility of any arrangement but Mr. Canning, and this is the predicament.'

"I then urged against Canning the fact of losing seven colleagues, and then placed his letter of resignation of the Duke of Bedford in the King's hands."

The most cruel blow he experienced, however, was in the desertion of the Sumners, the two bishops whom he had petted and promoted. One of these he tried to persuade to absent himself, at the least, but he declined.

THE KING TO THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER (?).

"Windsor Castle, March 10th, 1828.

"My dear Bishop,

"I am sure that in all you do you are influenced by the best and most honourable of motives. I shall therefore only add that I am always your sincere friend, "G. R."*

* Lord Ellenborough also gives an account of this memorable struggle, which will be found in the Duke of Wellington's "Despatches, Correspon-

To others he declared that the Duke of Wellington was now King of England, O'Connell King of Ireland, and he himself no more than Dean of Windsor. To Lord Skelmersdale, who came with an address, he said: "Put it down, take a chair, and let us have a talk." He then complained of his situation: that he had no knowledge of what was intended until the speech for the opening of Parliament was discussed in his presence; that he had no resource; that no other Administration could be formed. And he added that, "as he was recommended to go to some German baths for his legs, then they might take his brother William (the Duke of Clarence), who would make them a good Roman Catholic King. And then they would only have to send for Dr. Murray and Dr. Doyle to educate the Princess Victoria," etc. This was a melancholy pitiful display, and it was no wonder that the bishops and the other Protestant leaders, when they came to compare notes of his professions with his acts, could recount many instances of his "dupery," as they called it.

A few days afterwards, the veteran peer Eldon, who had been to a certain extent imposed upon by his grief, writes to his daughter: "The fatal Bills received the Royal Assent. After all I had heard in my visits, not a day's delay! God bless us and His Church!" The duke himself sent down the Bill to the King with other papers, as if it was an ordinary transaction. He did not go himself, in order to avoid any discussion or distressing scene.

THE KING TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

"Windsor Castle, Monday morning, ten o'clock,
"April 13, 1829.

"The King returns the Lord Chancellor the Bills which he has forwarded for the King's signature, which are now completed. As the Chancellor has (very properly) conceived it to be his duty to call the King's attention particularly to the two Bills relative to the Roman Catholics, the King cannot refrain from repeating to the Lord Chancellor his unaltered sentiments and feelings with respect to them, and observing that the King never before affixed his name with pain or regret to any Act of the Legislature."

dence, and Memoranda," under the date. "The Diary of Ellenborough" during the last two years of the reign is announced as the last sheets of this account are passing through the press (February, 1881), so I have been unable to use it.

CHAPTER XVII.

1829—1830.

These events naturally embroiled the duke with the Duke of Cumberland. How indifferent the former was, and what his opinion was of the King's brother, is set down in a pleasant conversation the Duke of Wellington held with Mr. Greville at this time. It offers to us a good appreciation of the King's character.

"'I make it a rule never to interrupt him,' said the duke, 'and when in this way he tries to get rid of a subject in the way of business which he does not like, I let him talk himself out, and then quietly put before him the matter in question, so that he cannot escape from it. I remember when the Duke of Newcastle was going to Windsor with a mob at his heels to present a petition (during the late discussions), I went down to him and showed him the petition, and told him that they ought to be prevented from coming. He went off and talked upon every subject but that which I had come about, for an hour and a half. I let him go on till he was tired, and then I said: "But the petition, sir; here it is, and an answer must be sent. I had better write to the Duke of Newcastle and tell him your majesty will receive it through the Secretary of State; and, if you please, I will write the letter before I leave the house." This I did, finished my business in five minutes, and went away with the letter in my pocket. I know him so well that I can deal with him easily, but anybody who does not know him, and who is afraid of him, would have the greatest difficulty in getting on with him. One extraordinary peculiarity about him is, that the only thing he fears is ridicule. He is afraid of nothing which is hazardous, perilous, or uncertain; on the contrary, he is all for braving difficulties;

but he dreads ridicule, and this is the reason why the Duke of Cumberland, whose sarcasms he dreads, has such power over him, and Lord Anglesey likewise; both of them he hates in proportion as he fears them.' I said I was very much surprised to hear this, as neither of these men were wits, or likely to make him ridiculous; that if he had been afraid of Sefton or Alvanley, it could have been understood. 'But,' rejoined the duke, 'he never sees these men, and he does not mind anybody he does not see; but the Duke of Cumberland and Lord Anglesey he cannot avoid seeing, and the fear he has of what they may say to him, as well as of him, keeps him in awe of them. No man, however, knows the Duke of Cumberland better than he does; indeed, all I know of the Duke of Cumberland I know from him, and so I told him one day. I remember asking him why the Duke of Cumberland was so unpopular, and he said: "Because there never was a father well with his son, or husband with his wife, or lover with his mistress, or a friend with his friend, that he did not try to make mischief between them." And yet he suffers this man to have constant access to him, to say what he will to him, and often acts under his influence.' I said: 'You and the Duke of Cumberland speak now, don't you?' 'Yes, we speak. The King spoke to me about it, and wanted me to make him an apology. I told him it was quite impossible. "Why," said he, "you did not mean to offend the Duke of Cumberland, I am sure." "No, sir," said I; "I did not wish to offend him, but I did not say a word that I did not mean. When we meet the royal family in society they are our superiors, and we owe them all respect, and I should readily apologise for anything I might have said offensive to the duke; but in the House of Lords we are their peers, and for what I say there I am responsible to the House alone." "But," said the King, "he said you turned on him as if you meant to address yourself to him personally." "I did mean it, sir," said I, "and I did so because I knew that he had been here, that he heard things from your majesty which he had gone and misrepresented and misstated in other quarters, and knowing that, I meant to show him that I was aware of it. I am sorry that the duke is offended, but I cannot help it, and I cannot make him an apology."'"

The duke was so afraid that the King would twist what he had said into an apology, and report it to his brother, that he took care to warn him, on going away. "Now, sir, remember that I will not apologise to the duke; and I hope your majesty will therefore not convey any such an idea to his mind." A strange tone—but justified—to take to his sovereign!

At the levee, however, his majesty could show his feelings

without restraint, receiving, to the delight of Lord Eldon, all his opponents with studied discourtesy—notably the pro-Catholic prelates—while on Mr. O'Connell he turned his back, in as offensive a manner as he could, muttering to his neighbour—"D——n the fellow; what does he come here for!"

We now find the King, relieved from political troubles, making an earnest appeal for a favourite.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, January 14, 1829.

"My dear Friend,

"I now write to you upon a matter in which I feel very much interested. The report of the Committee of the House of Commons upon Mr. Nash's business has been delivered in, and as I have been informed by one of that committee (not one of those who had any previous predilection towards him), 'without the slightest stain or imputation against his character.' I do therefore desire that you will direct his being gazetted by himself, on Tuesday next, the 16th of this month, as a baronet, with the remainder at his death (as he, Nash, has no family of his own) to his nephew, Mr. Edwards, a gentleman of excellent character, large property, who sat in the last Parliament, and who has proved himself a thorough supporter of Government, and a most loyal man, besides being well-known to me personally. Mr. Nash has been most infamously used, and there is but one opinion about it; and therefore it is not only an act of justice personally to him, but to my own dignity that this should forthwith be done. For, if those who go through the furnace for me, and for my service, are not protected, the favour of the sovereign becomes worse than nugatory.

"Your very sincere Friend,
"G. R."

The duke, however, was not inclined to comply with his wishes, hinting plainly it was undesirable for the King's interests, and that, in conjunction with the unfinished works at the new palace, it would lead to opening up the unpleasant business of outlay in the House of Commons. "Before he can lay aside prudence," he wrote to Sir W. Knighton, very significantly, "he must give the Government all the strength he can." Indeed, in connection with this very matter, the duke made bitter complaints to this confidant of the treatment he was experiencing. "Look at his society at the Lodge! If a minister (except myself) goes to the neighbourhood of Windsor he dare not approach.

Few dare go to the council; they are ill-received, and see their opponents honoured with the greatest favour and attention. What must the world think of this? the truth, namely, that the King wishes to get rid of us all. This is the most dignified course —to have at least a strong Government in his support."

The Chancellor declared "he was mad!" He was greatly pleased, Mr. Greville says, with the duke's duel, declaring that he would have called the duke's attention to the matter. It was remarked: "He will be wanting to fight a duel himself," and the pleasant Lord Sefton added sarcastically: "He will be sure to think that he has fought one."

Indeed the state of his health and his mode of life were enough to account for much of his extravagance, and certainly engendered those strange humours, fancies, and even delusions which marked his latter days. He seldom rose till about six in the evening, having spent most of the day in bed dozing and reading newspapers. His nights were wretched, and his unhappy valets were worn out attending; as he required to be handed everything, even his watch if it were lying beside him. The rooms were kept at the temperature of a stove. He had also a fancy for drinking inordinate quantities of cherry brandy, his favourite liqueur. And this habit, no doubt, bemused and bemuddled his brain, and engendered those curious dreams and delusions which were repeated at the time and caused such amusement.*

He was now particularly annoyed by an incident in which all

* Mr. Greville condescended to question closely the King's valet, in several interviews, as to the private household details and scandal, and received much information of the kind he desired. What a valet's report and a valet's judgment are, and what he sees, has been characterised by Mr. Carlyle. Says Greville: "I sent for Batchelor, and had a long talk with him. He said the King was well, but weak; his constitution very strong; no malady about him; but irritation in the bladder which he could not get rid of. He thinks the hot rooms and want of air and exercise do him harm, and that he is getting every day more averse to exercise and more prone to retirement; which, besides that it weakens his constitution, is a proof that he is beginning to break. Batchelor thinks he is in no sort of danger; I think he will not live more than two years. He says that his attendants are quite worn out with being always about him, and living in such hot rooms (which obliges them to drink), and seldom getting air and exercise. B. is at present well, but he sits up every other night with the King, and never leaves him. The King told them the other day that 'O'Reilly (the surgeon) was the d——dest liar in the world,' and it seems he is often in the habit of discussing people in this way to his valets de chambre. He reads a great deal, and every morning has his boxes brought to him and reads their contents. They are brought up by Knighton or Watson, both of whom have keys of all his boxes. He says there is not one person about him whom he likes."

the art of the duke was required to carry the point desired. Mr. Denman, a lawyer of eminence, had remained under a ban in his profession ever since the Queen's trial, having worn "a stuff gown" now for two-and-twenty years. This ostracism he owed to the King, often unforgiving and relentless where he had taken a dislike. This Denman, after vain attempts at redress, acquiesced in believing that it was simply owing to the general share he had taken in the trial. In 1828, however, he learned from the Chancellor that the King's rancour was owing to the Greek quotations used in his speech, and which the King took as scandalous personal imputations. The Duke of Wellington undertook the matter, saying: "I'll do it;" Denman, in a memorial, declaring that no such insinuation was ever in his mind, and that such would have been abhorrent to his feelings. After infinite trouble the duke prevailed, declaring it was "the toughest job he ever had," and that the King would receive his explanation and allow him to hold a patent of precedence. But this tardy reparation was accompanied by a penalty. The King stated his feelings in a declaration written on the memorial itself, in which was rather cleverly embodied his own vindication, with an insinuation of disbelief in what was submitted to him.*

"The King has read the statements as the annexed memorial:

"The King could not believe that the Greek quotation referred to had occurred to the mind of the advocate in the eagerness and heat of argument; nor that it was not intended; nor that it had not been sought for and suggested for the purpose of applying to the person of the sovereign a gross imputation. The King therefore considered it his duty to command the late Chancellor, Lord Eldon, and the Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst, never to approach the King with the name of the memorialist.

"Nevertheless, as the memorialist has distinctly denied, disowned, and disclaimed all intention to apply the quotation to the person of the sovereign, and has expressed his sorrow that the King should have believed he intended so to apply it, and has, moreover, in his memorial prayed his majesty to believe that no such insinuation was ever made by him, that the idea of it never entered his mind, the King commands that he may have a patent of precedence from the day of its date." †

* The text is said to have been the work of the Duke of Wellington, but the points were certainly suggested by the King.

† It must be said, that but for the high character of Denman, it would be almost impossible to accept the explanation given; for it seems the passage which is often in question was discovered by Dr. Parr, and supplied to the counsel to be used in his speech. The allusion is of the most gross and offensive kind, and certainly not recondite enough to have escaped a

His majesty, however, had not learned to be magnanimous; and in November of this year, the Recorder, whose duty it was to present the report on sentenced prisoners, having fallen ill, his duty devolved upon Mr. Denman, who was Common Serjeant. This produced the most extraordinary agitation at Windsor, the King vehemently refusing to receive his enemy.

The duke having announced to him by letter this state of things, the King replied, addressing him no longer as "My dear friend."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"Royal Lodge, November 9, 1829.

"My dear Duke,

"As it is impossible for me, on account of the state of my eyes, to write a letter by candlelight, I am under the necessity of having recourse to an amanuensis to convey to you my sentiments upon the subject of your letter just received.

"I must express to you my extreme surprise, my dear duke, that you should suggest to me that I should either decline to receive the Recorder's report to-morrow, or submit to the indignity of receiving the Common Serjeant to fulfil the duties of the Recorder upon the occasion, when you cannot fail to know the insult I have received from that individual; and you ought to know the firmness of my character in not bearing an insult from any human being with impunity.

"A provision has long since been made for the fulfilment of the Recorder's duties in the event of his indisposition, in the appointment of Mr. Serjeant Arabin as Deputy Recorder for that express purpose; and I desire that he should attend in that capacity to-morrow rather than defer the report, he having already officiated in that character.

"I must express a hope that this will be the last time that I shall be troubled relative to Mr. ——, as no consideration will ever induce me to admit that individual to my presence. I remain, my dear duke,

"Your sincere Friend,

"G. R.

"P.S.—Mr. Peel will accordingly announce to the Deputy Recorder that he will be required to officiate to-morrow."

man of education. It may have been unintentional, and the speaker have fancied it was simply a general allusion to tyrants and slaves, and had not time to consider the particular insinuation.

This was resolute and determined. But the duke proceeded to deal with him in his own way.* He wrote him a firm letter, showing him the difficulties of the situation he was putting himself in, declaring that the Council must be put off, and that he himself would go down and discuss the matter. The scene that followed seems incredible. The duke pointed out to him that he was committed to receiving Denman, having condoned the past; on which his majesty declared that he had been forced into it, and growing very violent, swore that he would never see him; on which the duke replied calmly it did "not signify one farthing" how long the executions were put off. That it was better not to have a scandal or a scene in the palace, etc. Then, in his usual way, letting the King run on until he had exhausted himself, he brought him back to the point, and it was agreed that the matter should be put off once more.

However, in this particular difficulty a solution was discovered, and pressure put on the ailing Recorder, who tried to get well as speedily as he could.

It must be said that there seems something ungracious in forcing a king to do what was so distasteful. But the duke seems to have grown into a sort of dislike for him, joined with contempt. "If I had known," he says of this distressing scene, "in January, 1828, one tittle of what I do now, and of what I discovered in one month after I was in office, I should never have been the King's minister, and should have avoided loads of misery! However, I trust that Almighty God will soon determine that I have been sufficiently punished for my sins, and will relieve me from the unhappy lot which has befallen me."

* All allowance may be made for the duke's resentment at the King's insincere treatment of him; but it seems scarcely becoming that the Prime Minister should have made a practice of showing the King's letters indiscriminately to friends, and of writing and uttering complaints of his sovereign, and of using very intemperate language as to his behaviour.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1830.

There was another influence that had been exerted very actively, at least during this period—that of the most adroit of *intriguantes*, Madame de Lieven, the Russian ambassadress. She had a particular dislike to the Duke of Wellington, and exerted her arts in inflaming the foolish bigotry of the Duke of Cumberland; and when he had his baggage packed and was ready to depart, she was believed to have persuaded him to remain. The duke accused her and her husband of playing an English party game, instead of doing the business of their sovereign: "Since I have been in office, I have the best authority for asserting that both have been engaged (as principals) in intrigues to deprive me and my colleagues of power, since January, 1828. They have misrepresented our views to their sovereign, and been the cause of a coolness between the countries." He had actually thought of having them recalled, but hesitated, especially as he felt himself "too strong for them." The King took pleasure in her lively society, and, as she gave out, in retailing his grievances to her. For nineteen years this extraordinary woman held her post, occupying a position such as no foreign envoy's wife has ever done before or since, holding an equally high position in the fashionable as in the political world. Not till the year 1834 did she return to Russia.

"The gentlemanlike manners and hospitality of the prince," says Mr. Raikes, "combined with the talents and grand air of the princess, rendered their house not only the resort of the most distinguished society, but the rival of our own most magnificent establishments. She was deeply engaged in all the cabals with

Mr. Canning in the year 1827, which ended in the resignation of the duke, and the short-lived Administration of the other. On his grace's return to office in 1828, she was anxious to regain his friendship, but the breach had been too flagrant ever to be entirely made up again. That event and the death of the Empress-mother, with whom she was living on the most intimate terms of correspondence, latterly very much diminished her political importance in London. Prince Lieven was always very much supposed to act according to her suggestions. She was a great favourite of George IV., who much admired her musical talents, and in those days she was a constant visitor at the cottage in Windsor Park."

Not less annoyed was the duke by the various attempts of the King to exercise patronage which belonged of right to the minister. He was often "caught" in attempts of this kind. But the duke held him in check with a cold stern authority. Thus, in August, he conceived the idea of going over to Paris on a visit to Charles X., and Sir W. Knighton was despatched to Walmer, to open the matter. The duke, as he said, "put an extinguisher on the foolish project," showing at once that as the French King was highly unpopular, it would be looked on as an attempt to give him support. He sometimes met a mortifying rebuff even from those to whom he wished to extend his bounty in an irregular way, as when he sent for Lord Aberdeen to tell him that he intended sending a ribbon to his brother. It is amusing to see the adroit caution with which the Thane puts the offer aside, writing the while to the Prime Minister: "The King," he says, "after giving me 'Nugent's History,' mentioned my brother with great approbation; upon which I thanked him for his gracious intentions towards him. He said that the ribbon should be sent out to him directly, and desired me to go to Naylor, and have it done directly. I told him that I had already communicated to my brother his majesty's gracious intentions, which I was sure would be quite satisfactory, and that he could very well afford to wait. He pressed this two or three times, to which I always made the same answer; at last he said very abruptly: 'Very well, just as you please.' I thought it would be rather too strong to tell him, in direct words, that he ought to speak to you. He was in very good humour, and appeared to be very well. As usual, he talked a great deal about the Lievens. He abused Lord Grey, and told me that, sitting with Madame de Lieven some time ago, and talking about the French Government, she had said that Chateaubriand was the most distinguished man in the country, and that Charles X. ought to make him his minister. The King replied that Charles X. was not fallen quite

so low as that, and need not so disgrace himself; adding that it would be almost as bad as if he were to send for Lord Grey."

Another conflict was even more mortifying for his majesty. In November, General Garth—associated with so many distressing scenes in the illness of the late King—died, and the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Hill, submitted two names for promotion; but the King nominated two friends of his own. The duke, called in council, seemed to shirk the matter, advising his friend, if the King persisted, "not to go on;" admonishing his friend that, "if he does go on, and gives way, there will be an end to his authority." Finally, if the King does not yield, then "send for me." "Unless the King gives way," he added in his blunt fashion, "this affair cannot be settled. We cannot allow the Duke of Cumberland to conduct the military affairs of the country." As a matter of course his majesty had to yield.

THE KING TO LORD HILL.

"Royal Lodge, Nov. 22, 1829.

"My dear Lord,

"Subsequent to the receipt of your letter this day, your letter of the 19th reached my hand; and, with reference to the recommendation therein preferred, I have to observe to you that I consider it essential for the service that the Royal Dragoons should ever be held by an officer of rank (notwithstanding the two successive precedents to the contrary); and as Lieut.-General Vandaleur has already a regiment of equal emolument, I prefer that Lieut.-General Lord Edward Somerset should be removed from the 17th Lancers to the Royals. I readily accede to your recommendation of Major-General Sir John Elley to succeed to the 17th Lancers; but in relinquishing in his favour my recommendation of Major-General Sir E. Kerrison, I must express my desire that Major-General Kerrison be selected for the next occurring vacancy; and that in future you should pursue the mode adopted by my late lamented brother, namely, that of submitting for promotion three or four names to me for my selection.

"G. R."

In the following instance the appointment was unexceptionable; but the King probably guessed that he was only anticipating the course of those in authority, and was eager to have the credit of being the author of the suggestion.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

"Royal Lodge, August 26.

"My dear Friend,

"I have just written to Lord Hill, in consequence of the unexpected and sudden death of poor Sir Henry Torrens being reported to me, to acquaint him of my intention that Sir Herbert Taylor should be his successor. I am sure that neither you, nor Lord Hill, nor myself, nor indeed the whole army, can have a difference of opinion as to the propriety of this appointment. His long service as Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief (my late forever-regretted brother), and in which place he succeeded the late Sir Henry Torrens when he was appointed Adjutant-General, entitles him; while by the correctness of his conduct, as well as the amiable tone of his manners to everyone, he gained and insured to him the affections, goodwill, and respect of the army. One word more: besides, it is a real pleasure to me to have him at the head of my own staff.

"This appointment of Sir Herbert Taylor to be Adjutant-General will of course vacate the office of Surveyor-in-General to the Ordnance, and I thought you would be glad to have the earliest information of it.

"Always your sincere Friend,
"G. R."

In December, when a political question of extreme delicacy arose, the King allowed his own prejudices to influence him in a most irregular interference. The question was that of the candidate for the throne of Greece, and Prince Leopold learned that the Duke of Cumberland had been closeted hours with the King, and had handed him a letter in favour of the Prince of Mecklenburg, one of the candidates. The King told Lord Aberdeen that he intended writing to the King of Prussia in his favour. The duke determined that this interference should end, and declared to his correspondent that "either you or I" must have a discussion with his majesty. The latter gave way, engaging to make no further answer but one of civility. The duke however ascertained from the Prussian minister that the King had actually promised his support to the candidate. There was more behind this than at first appeared. For there was here an unworthy dislike of long standing to one of the candidates—his son-in-law Prince Leopold—whom he was trying to deprive of his annuity. The prince had appealed indignantly to the duke: "The King should be made to feel that he exposes himself in a manner unprecedented as a British king, in acting upon a feeling of dislike,

which, I can say with truth, I have never given him cause for these fourteen years." His majesty, having unavailingly shown his feelings, yielded the point.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

"[Memorandum.]

"Windsor Castle, January 19th, 1830.

"The King cannot but deeply regret the selection made by France and Russia of Prince Leopold, as the prince to be placed at the head of the Greek kingdom.

"Without entering into a detail of reasoning, the King considers Prince Leopold not qualified for this peculiar station.

"Nevertheless, the two great Powers—France and Russia—having conjointly named Prince Leopold to be placed at the head of the Greek kingdom, the King in deference to the desire of those two great Powers, gives his assent.

"GEORGE R."

Early in the following year the prince, having come to London, submitted himself humbly to his majesty's pleasure, writing from Marlborough House, Feb. 27:

"SIRE,

"I learn with the most profound grief from Lord Aberdeen, that your majesty is dissatisfied with my conduct.

"I never, during all the fifteen years since you sent for me to this country, have been wanting in deference and respect, etc. For my part, I have always determined never to enter on this new course without the powerful protection and approbation of your majesty. I couldn't give a more marked proof of this than by resigning into your hand the position in which the negotiations have placed me.

"I will conform to your wishes as to allowances."

The Prince of Mecklenburg was a connection of the Duke of Cumberland, which accounted for his persevering interest, which he still exerted to the persistent thwarting of the duke's plans. The latter, in January, had once more to reprove his majesty in reference to this matter. "I do not complain of his personal hostility, but I complain that his is not fair political opposition. I complain of his reports of me personally at Windsor, and of his using your majesty's name in communication with political characters in this country, as well as abroad. From frequent long interviews with your majesty, he is supposed to speak

your majesty's language, even when he does not use your majesty's name. It exposes your majesty to be misunderstood; that you keep ministers to whom you do not give your confidence. I supplicate your majesty's attention to this subject."

Perhaps the last instance of unjustifiable interference took place a few weeks before the King's demise, in April. A person named C——, in the county of Clare, of the rank of a gentleman, had been capitally convicted for setting fire to his house. A petition had been sent to Windsor, where it had been supported by high influence, and urged upon the Home Secretary. The Lord-Lieutenant, unaware of this interference, had refused to extend any mercy. Meanwhile the King, eager to gratify those who were interested, had addressed a letter to the Lord-Lieutenant.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

"My dear Duke, "Windsor Castle, 10th April, 1830.

"Having received a petition from the respectable inhabitants of the county of Clare in favour of P—— C——, now under sentence of death for burning his house, and there being some favourable circumstances in his case, I am desirous of exercising the best prerogative of the Crown, that of mercy, in saving his life; leaving to your grace the commutation of punishment you may think fit.

"My eyes being indifferent, I make use of an amanuensis.

"Your sincere Friend,

"George R."

The excitement in the Cabinet on this interference was great, the Duke taking part with the Secretary. It was announced to be "quite intolerable." Letters were despatched down to Windsor of the usual reproving character. After all, the offence did not appear to be great. But the King at the time was on the eve of his last sickness, and languidly gave up the point, being found "ready to accept any suggestion about C——."

The strange idea of secluding himself, which had taken possession of him for some years, was in part owing to his consciousness of the alteration in his figure and appearance, which had, alas! grown bulky and bloated to a degree which no vanities or flatteries could blind him to. Even the well-known picture by Sir Thomas Lawrence, representing the King on a sofa, and in which this painter had no doubt softened these blemishes as much as possible, exhibits this corpulency to a remarkable degree.* The

* This well-known portrait was lately sold for seventy pounds.

singular life he led at Windsor for some years seemed to give an idea of unsettled mind. All the rides at Windsor were strictly guarded, no one was admitted, while his outrider rode on before to see that no one was spying. A favourite spot of the King's was the sandpit, near which his "menagerie" was maintained, and here he was fond of partaking of his favourite cherry brandy, kept specially for his majesty. Here he devised those strange whims and "fads" of the hour: "a new dress for the Guards," a new mode of folding the envelope of a letter, in which form he required all papers to be sent to him. This system led him to adopt a lazy languid life, very prejudicial to his health. The picture of this closing scene of one who had devoted his life to pleasure, is not an agreeable one. No doubt that life might have been prolonged, had he chosen to adopt a more active course, instead of sinking into a sort of languid state, as he so strangely did, shutting himself up at Windsor at his Lodge, and with eccentricity worthy of the proprietor of Fonthill Abbey.

In February, 1830, Mr. Greville, who had been at Windsor for a Council, noted that he was very blind, mistaking the Chancellor for Mr. Peel. At the same time Sir W. Knighton experienced his irritability, "expressed in his manner, as well as in his frame." The Duke of Cumberland, solicitous about a contribution to the enlargement of "our church" at Kew, which was at a standstill, was gratified by a "noble and kingly donation" from his royal brother, whom he found looking pale, and seeming to labour under an oppression of his chest. The fact was, he was known from the beginning to be suffering from dropsy, affection of the heart, and other dangerous maladies, and his condition was serious; but, as we have seen, both Halford and Knighton hoped that his good constitution would help him through.

Now the strange lists of delusions under which he laboured received an addition. Talking enthusiastically of the performances of Fleur-de-Lys, who won the cup at Goodwood, he came at last to think "he had ridden the horse himself." His collection of clothes sold by auction after his death might have filled a green-room wardrobe. He hardly ever gave away anything, Mr. Greville heard from his page, except his linen, which was distributed every year. "These clothes are the perquisite of his pages, and will fetch a pretty sum. There are all the coats he has ever had for fifty years, three hundred whips, canes without number, every sort of uniform, the costumes of all the orders in Europe, splendid furs, pelisses, hunting-coats and breeches, and among other things a dozen pair of corduroy breeches he had made to hunt in when Don Miguel was here. His profusion in these articles was unbounded, because he never paid for them, and his memory was so

accurate that he recollected every article of dress, no matter how old, and that they were always liable to be called on to produce some particular coat or other article of apparel of years gone by."

The Duke of Clarence, who had a real affection for him, kept troubling the Duke of Wellington with strange letters. He says: "The critical situation of the sovereign must make me think seriously, and I consider it is a fortunate circumstance I see the true objects contained in the last letter as your grace does; and I trust during the continuance of his majesty's illness our sentiments will agree, for I must look to your grace in that event, which would involve me in particular, and the empire at large in grief, for the loss of the best and most amiable of monarchs. But I am lamentably afraid of the worst, which God avert."

He was particularly sensitive as to the visits of his family, which he thought disturbed the King.

"I am afraid," he wrote on May 11th, "the King will not be found at all better, because this day he has appointed to see Princess Augusta and the Duchess of Gloucester. These interviews produce harm instead of good, and unfortunately my sisters have not the power to restrain their feelings."

It was now the beginning of May, and we find the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel interchanging views in a businesslike way as to the issue. "Pray consider," wrote the latter, "as to summoning the Council in case of the King's death." The duke feared that the result was certain. Yet it was strange to find the moribund King still planning his building improvements; a question of bringing the estimate for the Windsor buildings offered great difficulties, owing to the temper of the House; "difficulties aggravated by his tenacity on the subject of the passage from Carlton Gardens, which it is impossible to remove or soften at present." The duke saw him on the 5th, the day before he had a serious seizure which lasted for an hour, but he recovered by degrees and slept well. He eat with an appetite and talked of himself in good spirits, expressing a hope that "he should soon get out." He still preserved his looks. The duke had ventured on an ominous but salutary step—the sending Dr. Carr, the Bishop of Winchester, who was to remain at the Castle, and with whom the King had "two satisfactory conversations."

So the days dragged on, the King now rallying, now going back; so that Sir W. Knighton began to think that he would recover; but Halford and Tierney did not give him many days of life. Waller, another doctor, thought the danger was from a sudden attack on his chest. Yet he himself could not bear to think there was danger, but was full of plans, and talked cheerfully of the coming Ascot meeting. On the 23rd his symptoms

became worse, and a few days later Knighton was writing that he was gradually breaking down. On that day he was persuaded to sign an appeal to Parliament for the use of a stamp to be affixed in the presence of persons he deputed for the purpose. Lord Farnborough was named, because his society was agreeable to him; and the King refused to name anyone else as joint official, though pressed. Lord Farnborough, being about seventy years old, accepted reluctantly. Sir W. Knighton had placed on his majesty's table "a quarto bible of large size, an attention which the King appreciated, and it was remarked read in the volume a good deal." At the beginning of the next month a form of prayer was issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the usual form of such papers.

Dr. Carr afterwards related that he repeated this prayer on his knees by the King's bedside. At the close, his majesty, having listened to it with his utmost attention, three times repeated "Amen" with the greatest fervour and devotion. He expressed himself highly gratified with it, and begged that his thanks should be conveyed to its author. On June the 8th the physicians told him of the probable result. To which he replied, exactly as his brother had done: "God's will be done." And on the 13th he received the sacrament and "talked a good deal."

Then came a rally. The disease, it was thought, was then arrested, and it was thought he might go on for a long time, as his appetite and digestion seemed to improve. But the weakness of the heart might kill him at any moment. The truth was he never could be got to submit to the treatment regularly or to take the medicines.

In the course of Friday evening, the 25th, before nine o'clock, the physicians intimated their inability to give him further relief, and their opinion that his last moments were rapidly approaching. To this communication his majesty replied: "God's will be done;" and in a few moments after he asked: "Where is Chichester?" The Bishop of Chichester was instantly summoned to the royal chamber, and at his hands the dying sovereign received the sacrament. During the administration of this rite his majesty was much less troubled by the cough than he had previously been.

A simple and not undramatic account of the last scene was sent to the Duke of Wellington by a correspondent who withheld his signature.

"At half-past eleven on Friday night, not finding himself worse than he had been for some days, he dismissed Sir H. Halford, who had attended him from seven in the morning. His majesty composed himself for the night, and the pages retired to the outer

room. The King soon fell asleep in the position to which he had accustomed himself; leaning on a table, his forehead resting on one hand, and the other in Sir Wathen Waller's, who was sitting up with him. He slept very quietly till a quarter to two, when he awoke and asked for his medicine, and after it he had a little clove tea. He then resumed his former position and slept again for an hour, when he desired a page to be rung for, when he had a purgative motion. He returned to his own armchair and ordered the windows to be opened, according to his custom day and night. He said he was a little faint, and asked for some sal volatile. This he endeavoured several times to drink, but could not. Sir H. Halford was then called by his command. His majesty then pressed the hand of Sir Wathen Waller, which still remained in his, more strongly than usual, and looking full at him, exclaimed: "*My boy, this is death!*" and then closing his eyes, reclined back in his chair. At this instant Sir H. Halford entered the room. His Majesty gave him his hand, but never spoke afterwards; and with a very few short breathings, expired exactly as the clock struck a quarter after three o'clock, June 26th. Sir W. Knighton, Sir M. Tierney, Mr. Brodie—whose room was much more distant—and Sir H. Halford entered the room, and were present during his last moments. Sir W. Knighton had sat up all Thursday night."*

* His will was made in 1823 by Lord Eldon, and his executors were Lord Gifford and Sir W. Knighton. On searching his cabinets and drawers (the Duke of Wellington told Mr. Greville) when he died they found £10,000 in his boxes, and money scattered about everywhere, a great deal of gold. There were about 500 pocket-books, of different dates, and in every one money—guineas, one-pound notes, one, two, or three in each. He had never given away or parted with anything. There was a prodigious quantity of hair—women's hair—of all colours and lengths, some locks with the powder and pomatum still sticking to them, heaps of women's gloves, *gages d'amour* which he had got at balls, and with the perspiration still marked on the fingers, notes, and letters. The whole were destroyed. Mr. V. Fitzgerald told Mr. Greville "that the King had been annoying them as much as he could, that he took pleasure in making his Government weak, that the money matter (which the duke told me of before) had been settled by 'contrivances,' or that they must have gone to Parliament for the amount; that he has just ordered plate to the amount of £25,000." The royal plate at Windsor is said now to be worth £1,800,000. The gold service, ordered by George IV., dines 140 persons, and he also added to the collection one of the finest wine-coolers in the world, a shield formed of snuffboxes worth £9000, and thirty dozen plates worth £10,000. There are also a variety of pieces brought from abroad and from India; the latter include a peacock of precious stones of every kind, worth £30,000, and Tippoo's footstool, a tiger's head with crystal teeth, and a solid ingot of gold for his tongue. Whilst the Catholic Bill was passing, it was said that he ordered plate almost daily, to annoy his ministers. His coronation cost £250,000. Indeed, during these last days, the reign of extravagance may be

There is something touching in this spectacle, and that pressure of the hands of those he liked, at such a crisis, showed that his affectionate temper was of a genuine cast. But the "looking full" at his friend, with the strange expression: "My boy, this is death!" has an awful and original ghastliness.*

During these painful scenes it is pleasant to find that the image of the woman to whom he had given his affections and plighted his troth, was not absent from his thoughts. A letter from Mrs. Fitzherbert was brought to him, in which that much-tried lady offered to come to him, and watch over and soothe his last moments. She was told afterwards that her remembrance was said to have given him much comfort. She cherished the belief that he always wore round his neck her miniature, and desired to have it buried with him.

In the early days of their affection the Prince had given her a jewel, which she had formed into two lockets, to hold their miniatures. On the first breach she returned his, but he did not hers, which was, as the true woman seemed to think, a proof of affection, reluctant to part with all. Lord Albemarle heard that he begged the Duke of Wellington that he might be buried as he lay, without his night-dress being disturbed; and he adds that the duke could not resist looking to see the reason of this request, and found the jewel round his neck, and "attached to a dirty piece of black ribbon." This the duke told to Mrs. Damer.

gathered from the state of things in the Lord Steward's department. One who in the succeeding reign had to reform this Augean disorder thus describes the state of things: "There was an allowance of £500 a-year to the lower servants in lieu of small beer. The history is, that, when allowed small beer in kind, they were all allowed access *ad libitum* to the cellar, and often would not take the trouble to turn the cock after having drawn their quantity, but let hogsheads run off from very wantonness. The then officers in power, instead of punishing them, thought it right to turn the beer into money (the servants having ale and porter besides fully sufficient); and hence this £500 a-year compensation for not being permitted to continue this wasteful extravagance. Every person seems allowed to carry away as much provision as he can scramble for, after being himself satisfied. If a bottle of wine or porter is opened for a glass, the rest is carried off; the meat in a napkin, which seldom finds its way back again; and, in addition to this, scores of persons who have no connection with the domestic establishment appear to run riot upon the unlimited allowance for these tables."

* There were several forms given out of this ejaculation. "O God! I am dying!" as if in despair. Mr. Raikes has it: "Watty! what is this? It is death. They have deceived me!" This last expression must have been uttered, and has often been repeated. In some admirable remarks, suggested by this scene, Sir Henry Halford vindicates the course he pursued, and with such good sense and feeling, as shows that he was eminently suited to have been the confidential adviser of the royal family. "If, in cases attended with danger in private life, the physician has need of discretion

The bishop who attended the King, Dr. Carr, assured Mr. Bodenham that he had noticed a portrait, but it had a silver chain.

When in 1825 Miss Seymour was married to Colonel Dawson Damer, the King sent her a present of £2000 with an affectionate letter, in which he begged of her "to be kind to her best friend, Mrs. Fitzherbert." This showed that the old affection still burned bright. After Mrs. Fitzherbert's death, her ward one day displayed to a visitor, Lady Morgan, a coffer containing all the relics of this famous attachment. She describes its contents:

"There were two lockets of very curious description, minutely small portraits of the Prince and the lady; they were each covered with a crystal, and this crystal was a diamond cut in two. They were less than the size of a halfpenny, set in small brilliants. On the death of George IV. she sent to William IV. to request back some of her pictures, gems, and letters, left in the late King's hands. He sent her everything that he could find in the cabinet of his brother, and a beautiful picture in oil of Mrs. Fitzherbert;

and sound sense to direct his conduct, the difficulty must doubtless be increased when his patient is of so elevated a station that his safety becomes an object of anxiety to the nation. In such circumstances, the physician has a duty to perform, not only to the sick personage and his family, but also to the public, who, in their extreme solicitude for his recovery, sometimes desire disclosures which are incompatible with it. These public documents may become known to the royal sufferer himself. Is the physician, then, whilst endeavouring to relieve the anxiety or satisfy the curiosity of the nation, to endanger the safety of the patient; or, at least, his comfort? Surely not. Meanwhile, the family of the monarch and the Government have a claim to fuller information than can, with propriety or even common humanity, be imparted to the public at large. In the case of his late majesty, the King's Government and the royal family were apprised as early as the 27th of April, that his majesty's disease was seated in his heart, and that an effusion of water into the chest was soon to be expected. It was, not, however, until the latter end of May—when his majesty was so discouraged by repeated attacks in the embarrassment in his breathing, as to desire me to explain to him the nature of his complaint, and to give him my candid opinion of its probable termination—that the opportunity occurred of acknowledging to his majesty the extent of my fears for his safety. This communication was not necessary to suggest to the King the propriety of religious offices, for his majesty had used them daily. But it determined him, perhaps, to appoint an early day to receive the Sacrament. He did receive it with every appearance of the most fervent piety and devotion, and acknowledged to me repeatedly afterwards that it had given him great consolation—true comfort. After this, when 'he had set his house in order,' I thought myself at liberty to interpret every new symptom as it arose in as favourable a light as I could, for his majesty's satisfaction; and we were enabled thereby to rally his spirits in the intervals of his frightful attacks, to maintain his confidence in his medical resources, and to spare him the pain of contemplating approaching death, until a few minutes before his majesty expired."—"Essays and Orations," p. 89.

but the diamond-enshrined miniature was not forthcoming. After some time, however, she received a letter from the Duke of Wellington, who wrote to say, having heard that such a locket had been inquired for, he would be happy to place it in her hands, as it was in his possession. He added, that in his quality of the King's executor, he had gone into his room immediately after his decease, and perceiving a red cord round his neck, under his shirt, discovered the locket containing the miniature."*

We may hope it was so, though not much turns upon it. After his death the good-natured Sailor-King made her all amends.

"Soon after his death," as she told Lord Stourton, "she left town for Brighton. There she a second time received the kindest messages from William the Fourth; but upon his inquiry why she did not come to see him, she stated the peculiar difficulties of her situation, and a wish, if it was not asking too much from his condescension, that he would graciously honour her with a personal communication at her own house, previously to her visit to the Pavilion. The King kindly complied with her request without delay, and she told him that she could not, in her present circumstances, avail herself of the honour of waiting upon his majesty, without asking his permission to place her papers before him, and requesting his advice upon them. Upon her placing in his hands the documents which have been preserved in justification of her character, and especially the certificate of her marriage, and another interesting and most affecting paper, this amiable sovereign was moved to tears by their perusal, and expressed his surprise at so much forbearance with such documents in her possession, and under the pressure of such long and severe trials. He asked her what amends he could make her, and offered to make her a duchess. She replied that she did not wish for any rank; that she had borne through life the name of Mrs. Fitzherbert; that she had never disgraced it, and did not wish to change it; that, therefore, she hoped his majesty would accept her unfeigned gratitude for his gracious proposal, but that he would permit her to retain her present name.

"'Well, then,' said he, 'I shall insist upon your wearing my livery,' and ended by authorising her to put on weeds for his royal brother. He added: 'I must, however, soon see you at the Pavilion;' and I believe he proposed the following Sunday, a day on which his family were more retired, for seeing her at dinner, and spending the evening at the Pavilion. 'I shall introduce you myself to my family,' said he, 'but you must send me word of your arrival.'

"At the appointed hour, upon her reaching the Pavilion, the

* Lady Morgan, "Memoirs," ii. 425.

condescending monarch came himself and handed her out of her carriage, and introduced her to his family, one after the other, as one of themselves. He ever after treated her in the same gracious manner."

Mr. Raikes corroborates this, her own story.

On her death, which took place in 1837, she enjoyed an annuity of £6000, procured for her from the Prince, through the agency of the late Queen, strange to say, and her best friend the Duke of York. She was buried at Brighton, the scene of all joys and troubles, living to be nearly eighty years old.

By arrangement between her friends and those of the royal family, it was determined to destroy all papers, save such as were necessary for the vindication of her character.*

* Those that fell under this category were:

"1. The Mortgage on the Palace at Brighton.

"2. The Certificate of the Marriage, dated Dec. 21st, 1785.

"3. Letter from the late King, relating to the Marriage, signed [George the Fourth].

"4. Will written by the late King [George the Fourth].

"5. Memorandum written by Mrs. Fitzherbert, attached to a letter written by the clergyman who performed the Marriage Ceremony."

It will be seen that these papers, seen and sanctioned by men of such character as the Duke of Wellington and Lord Albemarle, were convincing. They lie now at Coutts's Bank sealed up.

L'ENVOI.

After recounting the course of the long life of George IV., it is hardly necessary to make a formal estimate of his character. Many instances could be given of his kindly feeling and good heart. His charities were often magnificent: as in 1825, during the Spitalfields distress, when he gave three donations of £1000 each; and when a case of private suffering was reported to him, he sent £500, and procured by subscription £1500. His name, too, is pleasingly associated with that of Beethoven, for whose wants he contributed £200. But the recorded instances of this sort would fill many pages. At the dismal conferences with the Recorder of London, when the fates of prisoners were finally determined, the King was invariably on the side of mercy, and would conscientiously and for hours investigate every case that seemed to have a claim to mercy. This was an indulgence of his feelings, but a troublesome duty which he always adhered to. He had, of a certain sort, a deep religious, or rather devotional feeling: and even in his early days, Lady Harcourt used to declare he was the only one of the royal brothers "that had any religion."*

It is also evidence of his sound taste, that he should have begun a collection of the Dutch and Flemish masters at a time when the merits of the school were not acknowledged. But what gives him a high claim to the title of a true patron, was the really splendid project of having the portraits of the sovereigns, ministers, and ambassadors, painted for the Great Banqueting-room at Windsor. The scheme involved the painting of thirty-eight full-length pictures, of which no less than thirty-five are the work of Sir Thomas Lawrence. This work was completed between the years 1815 and 1821, and the artist has recorded the interesting

* There is a well-known story of his having discharged a servant in a passion one Sunday morning, and of his being respectfully told by the Bishop of Winchester, that he was not in a proper frame of mind to receive the Sacrament. He thanked his monitor, and restored the man to his place. On another occasion he wept and went down on his knees to a bishop when reproved for desecrating the Sabbath.

progress of his travels abroad as he attended on his royal sitters One of these portraits is justly considered the finest of modern times, and will bear just comparison with the finest of ancient days, namely, that of Pope Pius VII. His encouragement of the arts, and of projects of all intellectual character, was also truly splendid. The best instance is his patronage of Wilkie, from whom on his return from Spain he secured his six works for £2800.

One good instance of his cleverness at repartee, or readiness in conversation, is worth recording. The Rev. Sydney Smith was beside him at a dinner, when an odd subject of discussion was started: "Who was the most wicked man that ever lived?" Mr. Smith said, awkwardly enough: "The Regent Orleans—and he was a Prince!" On which the English Regent said: "I should give the preference to his tutor, the Abbé Dubois, and he was a priest, Mr. Sydney."

His patronage of the Royal Society of Literature, to which he contributed £1000 a-year; his many pensioners; his love of music and of the stage—all this showed an instinct truly royal. Actors he also patronised, and the more jovial sort—"Jack" Johnstone, Matthews, and others, were often bidden to Carlton House. Reports of his conversations with these performers show a rational spirit, with a wish for gathering such information and entertainment as they could furnish, and without any sacrifice of dignity.

A good specimen of his love of fun and frolic is furnished by the story of his present of the cream-coloured Hanoverian horse to Admiral Nagle, at Brighton; who, delighted at the gift, mounted the animal in presence of the whole Court to "try him." Some heavy showers washed off the paint which the Prince had had applied in the stable, and the admiral, to his astonishment, presently found himself with a dark-bay horse. His royal master, after due enjoyment of the joke, took care to present him with an animal of the true colour and breed.

But it was in his relations with certain remarkable men of mark and judgment that he really shone, and such he always impressed in the most favourable manner.

It was thus that Walter Scott, when he came to town, became, as it were, quite fascinated by his advances, and it must be confessed that his treatment of this new friend justified to some extent that charm of manner which obtained for him the well-known *sobriquet*. "Let me know," said the Regent in 1815, "when he comes, and I'll get up a snug little dinner that will suit him. And the more Scotch the better," he added. Such a little dinner was got up, the Duke of York, Lord Yarmouth, Lord Melville,

and others, being of the company. "The Prince and Scott," said Mr. Croker, "were the two most brilliant story-tellers, in their several ways, I have ever happened to meet. Both exerted themselves, and he could not say which had shone the most. The Regent was enchanted with Scott, and Scott with him. Afterwards Scott told stories of Scotch judges, which the Regent capped with some of his own judges." The description of the evening, it must be said, gives a very good idea of the Prince's powers of pleasing and readiness. At midnight he called for a bumper to the author of "Waverley." Scott declared the author should hear of the compliment; on which the Prince drank to the author of "Marmion," quoting happily: "Now, Walter, my man, I have checkmated you for ance." The Prince sang many songs in good style, and presented his friend with a magnificent snuffbox. And on his merits in society the poet passes this judicious opinion, in which we may allow a little for partiality: "He was the first gentleman he had seen, certainly the first English gentleman of his day. As to his abilities, as distinct from his charming manners, how could anyone form a fair judgment of that man who introduced what subject he chose, discussed it just as long as he chose, and dismissed it when he chose?"

He was particularly anxious to impress and attract men of worth and character, whose good word would, of course, be valuable. It has been shown how eager he was to secure Romilly; but more characteristic was his attempt to win that "good man eminent" and "saint," Wilberforce. There is something almost amusing in his account of the struggle between conscience and the bait of the Court. "The Prince and Duke of Clarence very civil. Prince showed he had read Cobbett. Spoke strongly of the blasphemy of his late papers, and most justly. I was asked again last night, and to-night; but declined, not being well." This excuse, however, would not long serve, and three days afterwards he was again at the Pavilion. "The Prince came up to me and reminded me of my singing at the Duchess of Devonshire's ball in 1782, of the particular song, and of our then first knowing each other. 'We are both, I trust, much altered since, sir,' was his answer. 'Yes, the time which has gone by must have made a great alteration in us.' 'Something better than that too, I trust, sir.'"

Jovial, epicurean, shifty, clever, and good-natured, he offers one more disastrous spectacle of a life wrecked by self-indulgence and an unbounded love of pleasure.

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